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A HISTORY

OF

GERMAN LITERATURE

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GERMAN LITERATURE

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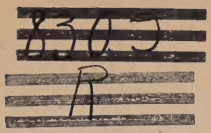

PREFACE.

WHILE the general object and scope of the present History of German Literature are sufficiently obvious, some explanation is necessary with regard to the illustrative passages which form one of its features. Such passages are accompanied, in the case of older dialects, by a literal German version, which is to be considered as a glossary rather than as a translation. It is believed that by this means the reader will be able better to appreciate the meaning and poetic value of the extracts than if he were offered an English version or an actual translation into modern German. Medieval literature cannot be approached through the medium of translations, and, as F. Pfeiffer remarks in the introduction to his edition of Walther von der Vogelweide, "Mittelhochdeutsche Gedichte auch nur erträglich ins Neuhochdeutsche zu übersetzen, ist ein Ding der Unmöglichkeit." Old High German, Old Saxon and Middle High German extracts are based on standard texts; but, from the Early High German period onwards, titles of works and quotations are taken from original editions — that is to say, the

orthography is not modernised. The bibliographical notes are restricted to references which are likely to be of service to the English or American student. As a work which is to be found in every larger library, and consequently generally accessible, the collection of *Deutsche Nationallitteratur*, edited by J. Kürschner, is—irrespective of the unequal value of the individual volumes—referred to throughout.

For what I owe to other workers in the field, and for invaluable hints and suggestions from those who have helped me in reading the proofs—especially my friend Professor F. H. Wilkens of Union College, Schenectady—I have to express my hearty thanks. Above all, I am indebted to the Universitäts- und Landes-Bibliothek in Strassburg, which has enabled me, in almost all cases, to write from a first-hand acquaintance with the literature.

JOHN G. ROBERTSON.

STRASSBURG, *July* 1, 1902.

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INTRODUCTION.

ALTHOUGH the criteria of poetic excellence in Germany have often differed widely from those acknowledged elsewhere, the historical development of German literature has naturally many features in common with that of other European literatures; and, while its periods of flourishing and decay have rarely coincided with those in France, in England, or even in Scandinavia, they have, in general, been rooted in social and intellectual movements, the significance of which was more than national. In Germany, as in other lands, for example, a shadowy pre-Christian epoch was followed by an age of rigid monasticism; the knight of the Crusades receded before the burgher of the rising towns, and Reformation was intimately associated with Renaissance. And in more recent centuries, Germany has responded even more quickly than her neighbours to the social and intellectual changes which, heedless of national or linguistic barriers, have, from time to time, swept across Europe. While no modern literature has grown up in entire independence, none is bound by closer ties or is more indebted to its fellows than that of Germany. Before entering on the study of this literature, it is consequently important to make clear, by means of a comparative survey, the position which it occupies in Europe and the relations in which it stands to other literatures; to establish in how far divergences in the evolution of German

letters are to be ascribed to national temperament, in how far to accidents of social or political history.

Divisions of German literature.

Historically regarded, German literature[1] admits of a natural division into three epochs, each of which is distinguished by special linguistic characteristics: an Old High German period, in which the dialects of South Germany retained the wide range of vowel sounds to be found in all the older Germanic languages; a Middle High German epoch, beginning about 1050, in which that diversity of vowel sounds and grammatical forms had in great measure disappeared; and, lastly, a New High German or modern German period, which began about the middle of the fourteenth century. During the second of these periods, the High German dialects gained an ascendancy over those of the North and of Central Germany, while, in New High German times, German literature is practically restricted to High German.

Setting out from the fact that the "Blütezeit" of German poetry, at the turn of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, was followed by a period of depression, which, ultimately, towards the end of the eighteenth century, made way for the crowning age of German classical poetry, Wilhelm Scherer attempted to establish for German literature a general law of evolution.[2] He regarded it as oscillating between "periods of flourishing," which recurred at regular intervals of six hundred years; according to his hypothesis, the epoch which touched its

[1] Cp. A. Koberstein, *Grundriss zur Geschichte der deutschen Nationallitteratur* (1827), 5th ed., by K. Bartsch, 6 vols., Leipzig, 1872-74 (vol. i. of a sixth edition appeared in 1884); G. C. Gervinus, *Geschichte der deutschen Dichtung* (1835-36), 5th ed., by K. Bartsch, 5 vols., Leipzig, 1871-74; A. F. C. Vilmar, *Geschichte der deutschen Nationallitteratur* (1848), 24th ed., with a continuation by A. Stern, Marburg, 1894; W. Wackernagel, *Geschichte der deutschen Litteratur* (1848-53), 2nd ed., by E. Martin, Basle, 1879-94; K. Goedeke, *Grundriss zur Geschichte der deutschen Dichtung* (1857-81), 2nd ed., Dresden, 1884 ff. (seven volumes have appeared); W. Scherer, *Geschichte der deutschen Litteratur* (1883), 9th ed., Berlin, 1902; F. Vogt and M. Koch, *Geschichte der deutschen Litteratur von den ältesten Zeiten bis zur Gegenwart*, Leipzig, 1897; K. Francke, *German Literature, as determined by Social Forces*, 4th ed., New York, 1901. Cp. also J. Kürschner, *Deutsche Nationallitteratur*, 222 vols., Stuttgart, 1882-98 (referred to in the present volume as D.N.L.)

[2] *Geschichte der deutschen Litteratur*, 9th ed., 18 f.

zenith in 1200 was preceded by an earlier "Blütezeit" of unwritten literature, which reached its highest point about 600. Literary evolution, however, is too complicated a phenomenon to be explained by laws simple as those which Kepler applied to the planetary system; in any case, Scherer's first "period of flourishing" is only a hypothesis. Other Germanic races, such as the Goths, had, as early as the fourth century, acquired a certain facility of literary expression, and the Anglo-Saxon epic of *Beowulf* dates from the seventh or eighth century; but, considering only the West Germanic races of the continent—those which especially concern us here—we possess but one fragment of a heroic lay, the *Hildebrandslied*, and a couple of pre-Christian charms, as a testimony to the nation's imagination previous to the Carlovingian epoch. The themes of the German national epic had originated, it is true, in the period of the Migrations; but whether the traditions had, in that age, taken a form which could be described as literary, is open to doubt.

The Old High German period.

The Old High German period of German literature[1] extended from about 750 to 1050; but, as the chief literary remains date only from the ninth century, this epoch may, roughly speaking, be said to lie between the age in which Anglo-Saxon poetry flourished and the age of Anglo-Saxon prose. It was essentially a period of monkish ascendancy, and —if we except the epic poetry of the Saxons—the Germanic imagination was held rigidly in check by Christianity. In the unequal battle between the World and the Church, the former succumbed, and the Latin Renaissance of the eleventh century finally crushed out the weak beginnings of a national literature. Meanwhile, however, the Romance literatures of

[1] Cp. J. Kelle, *Geschichte der deutschen Litteratur*, 1 (to the middle of the eleventh century), Berlin, 1892; R. Koegel, *Geschichte der deutschen Litteratur bis zum Ausgang des Mittelalters*, 1 (in two parts), Strassburg, 1894-97; also R. Koegel and W. Bruckner, in Paul's *Grundriss der germanischen Philologie*, 2nd ed., 2, 1, Strassburg, 1901, 29 ff.; W. Golther, *Geschichte der deutschen Litteratur von den ersten Anfängen bis zum Ausgang des Mittelalters* (D.N.L., 163, 1), Stuttgart [1892].

the South and West of Europe were developing more rapidly than those of the North. While, early in the twelfth century, Germany was still engaged in freeing herself from monastic asceticism, and England was being remodelled by the Normans, French singers were composing the first national *chansons*, the lyric of the troubadours was flourishing in Provence, and the *Poema del Cid* had taken shape in Spain.

Middle High German literature.

The revival of German poetry—now known as Middle High German[1]—was late in setting in, but when it did come, it advanced with all the more rapidity. In the course of the twelfth century, the iron rule of the Church began to yield, worldly themes took the place of religious legends as subjects for poetry, and wandering singers or "Spielleute" became a factor of importance. Had German literature been left wholly to itself, its history in the thirteenth century might possibly have been analogous to that of English literature of the same period; but, towards the close of the twelfth century, German poets came under the influence of their French contemporaries, and, within a few decades, Middle High German literature had far outstripped all its neighbours. The Arthurian epic became in Germany, what it already was in France, the chosen form of courtly romance, and the national sagas were remodelled under the stimulus of the new ideals: even the German lyric was indebted to Provençal singers. Thus, it might be said that the zenith of Middle High German poetry fell a little later than that of medieval literature in France, and a full century before French chivalric literature awakened an echo in England.

Middle High German poetry was exposed to the same causes of decay as those to which all pre-Renaissance litera-

[1] Cp. F. Khull, *Geschichte der altdeutschen Dichtung*, Graz, 1886; F. Vogt in Paul's *Grundriss der germanischen Philologie*, 2nd ed., 2, 1, Strassburg, 1901, 161 ff. The beginning of the period is discussed by J. Kelle in his *Geschichte der deutschen Litteratur*, 2, Berlin, 1896, and in W. Scherer, *Geschichte der deutschen Dichtung im* 11. *und* 12. *Jahrhundert* (*Quellen und Forschungen*, 12), Strassburg, 1875, and *Geistliche Poeten der deutschen Kaiserzeit* (same series, 1 and 7), Strassburg, 1874-75.

tures were subject; in Germany, as elsewhere, the change which came over medieval society — the disappearance of knighthood and the rise of the middle classes — left deep traces on literature: verse yielded to prose, relative form to formlessness, and the naïve art of the courtly singers to didacticism and satire. But there was also another reason for the rapid decay of what was the richest, because the most concentrated, of all medieval literatures. The Middle High German period was, as will be seen, almost exclusively an epoch of poetry; Germany had no prose writers, no Villehardouin or Joinville, no Duns Scotus or Roger Bacon; she had only poets, neither thinkers nor historians, and before the thirteenth century had reached its close, her literature, like a plant without adequate roots, had withered away. And in the following century—the fourteenth—when Italy could point to Dante, Petrarch and Boccaccio, when, in France, the long age of medieval romance was followed by a period of satire and allegory, and English poetry was steadily advancing towards the poetic efflorescence associated with Chaucer, Germany fell back into comparative darkness; her writers appealed only to the crass tastes of the people. Not, indeed, until after the early Italian Renaissance and the culture of the Humanists[1] had spread beyond the Alps, did the Germans begin to do what their neighbours had done before them, namely, to establish universities and thus lay a solid basis for a national literature. At a time when Froissart was writing French history, and Wyclif was fighting for reformation in England, mystics like Eckhart and Tauler were only beginning to lay the real foundations of German intellectual life.

Reformation and Renaissance.

Germany's recovery from this period of depression was, however, phenomenally rapid. At the beginning of the fifteenth century, the German-speaking races had virtually no literature and little prospect of one; but not a hundred years elapsed before Luther had inaugurated the Protestant

[1] Cp. L. Geiger, *Renaissance und Humanismus in Italien und Deutschland*, 2nd ed., Berlin, 1899.

Reformation and placed his people in the van of European progress. The epoch between the decay of Middle High German as a distinct language, and the final cystallisation of modern German, it is usual to describe as Early New High German. The literature of these centuries is intimately associated with Reformation and Renaissance; but it is significant for the German national character that the effects of the Renaissance did not make themselves felt in Germany until after the Reformation. In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, the Humanists, it is true, had endeavoured to awaken Germany to the importance of the classic revival, by bringing the treasures of Southern literature within the grasp of German poets, but their efforts met with little success. Until the way had been prepared for it by the Reformation, the Renaissance made no lasting impression on German literature. In its defiant individualism, Protestantism was thoroughly Germanic; under its influence, the literature of the people finally triumphed over the literature of knighthood; satire and fable flourished as never before, and the drama—hitherto restricted to liturgic representations in the churches—was on the way to becoming what it had long been in England and France, a national art. Thus, once more, at the beginning of the sixteenth century, Germany did not lag very far behind the other nations of Europe; but her progress was due to the spirit of the Reformation, not to that of the Renaissance, and her poetry was Germanic, as it had never yet been—even at the zenith of the Middle High German period. Just, however, as German culture had reached a stage of its development when it might have benefited by the Latin Renaissance — in the seventeenth century — the nation was overwhelmed by the most appalling catastrophe in modern history, by the Thirty Years' War. The literature of the Reformation era, so full of promise, dwindled away in artificial imitation and formless satire; religious poetry alone was able to withstand the general decay. In the great era in European literature which opened with Shakespeare and

Bacon, with Tasso, Cervantes and Lope de Vega, and closed with Calderon, Milton and the master-dramatists of France, Corneille, Racine and Molière—the most brilliant literary era in the history of the world—Germany had no share. Crude imitations of Elizabethan dramas took the place of the abortive national drama; versions of Spanish picaresque novels and French heroic romances formed the chief reading of the cultured public: in place of a Shakespeare, a Gryphius; in place of a Cervantes, a Grimmelshausen; while the lessons which France learned from Boileau, Germany received from the subordinate genius of Opitz. It was the very end of the seventeenth century, before a thinker of the standing of Leibniz saved the honour of the German name and laid the foundations for a brighter future.[1]

The eighteenth century.

At the beginning of the eighteenth century, while England and France stood in the foreground of European intellectual life, Germany was again the outcast. And this time, the gulf that separated her from the neighbouring nations was even greater than in the Reformation era, the task before the nation correspondingly harder. German literature of the eighteenth century[2] falls into two natural divisions, the first of which was characterised by imitation of French and, more especially, of English models, while the second was a period of national originality. Under the influence of the English nature-poets, Klopstock created the modern German lyric; under that of Richardson and Fielding, Gellert and Wieland laid the basis of the novel; while, in the school of English thinkers and dramatists, Lessing became the master-critic of his time, and the pioneer

[1] Cp. C. Lemcke, *Geschichte der deutschen Dichtung neuer Zeit*, 1 (*Von Opitz bis Klopstock*), 2nd ed., Leipzig, 1882; K. Borinski, *Geschichte der deutschen Litteratur seit dem Ausgang des Mittelalters* (D.N.L., 163, 2), Stuttgart [1894].

[2] Cp. J. Schmidt, *Geschichte der deutschen Litteratur von Leibniz bis auf unsere Zeit*, 4 vols., Berlin, 1886-90; H. Hettner, *Geschichte der deutschen Litteratur im 18. Jahrhundert*, 4th ed. (edited by O. Harnack), 2 vols., Brunswick, 1893-95; J. W. Schaefer, *Geschichte der deutschen Litteratur des 18. Jahrhunderts*, 2nd ed. (edited by F. Muncker), Leipzig, 1881.

of the modern German drama. By the middle of the century, when Goethe was born, Germany had thus made a vast stride forwards. In drama, she could not compare with Italy, where Metastasio, Goldoni and Gozzi were still alive to uphold the Italian theatre, but, in all else, she was in advance of both Italy and Spain. Goethe's childhood was contemporary with the age of Goldsmith and the great English historians—that on which Dr Johnson set his stamp —while the fresh, vigorous beginnings of Ewald von Kleist and Klopstock belong, significantly enough, to the same period as the mature poetry of Gray. But France was the source of ideas no less vital to German development than were those that came from England, and Lessing and Winckelmann were overshadowed by their French contemporaries, Voltaire, Diderot and Rousseau.

As the century drew to its close, the individual character of the German mind became more and more marked. The outburst of "Sturm und Drang" was, although inspired by Rousseau, almost an isolated phenomenon in the European literature of the time; the buoyant vigour of the German drama was without a parallel; the ballad-poetry of men like Bürger was only equalled by the *Percy Reliques* on which it was modelled; with the single exception of Burns, there was not a lyric poet in Europe who could be compared with the leading German singers of that eventful time; even master-thinkers like Hume and Condillac were of inferior importance to Herder and Kant. Germany's hour had come at last, and, at the end of the century, when the French Revolution was destroying the results of generations of Latin culture, German philosophy and German literature held the leading position in Europe. In the fugue of the nations, to quote Hettner's application of Goethe's suggestive metaphor, England had, during the eighteenth century, led with the first voice, France had carried on the second, and to Germany had fallen the last and most resonant of all.

The nineteenth century.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, German

classical literature had reached its zenith. But this was not all: in half-conscious antagonism to the reigning classicism, the Romantic School inaugurated a new movement, which left traces on the development of literature almost to the close of the century. Germany, however, soon ceased to play the leading *rôle* in European literature; for before Goethe's death, France was, once again, exerting a decisive influence on the general current of thought and letters, and Byron was unquestionably more of a "world-poet" than any of his German contemporaries, Goethe excepted. The "Young German" epoch, that is to say, the epoch that lay between the Revolutions of 1830 and 1848, was characterised by subservience to France; the poets of the French *école romantique* gave such ideas as they borrowed from Germany a cosmopolitan stamp, and Hugo, Musset and Béranger became, like Byron, forces in German literature. Between 1840 and 1848, the Germans, again docilely following France, learned to express their enthusiasm for freedom in political lyrics; and Balzac and George Sand —like Scott, a little earlier—gave Germany examples of a fiction which satisfied modern needs better than did the novels of the Romantic School. Except at the very beginning of the nineteenth century, Germany passed through no literary epoch which could be compared with that of French Romanticism or with the "Blütezeit" of English Victorian literature. In great measure this was due to political causes, to a want of national unity; for, throughout the century, there was no lack of writers of genius: a nation that could point to lyric poets like Eichendorff, Heine, Mörike and Storm, to dramatists such as Kleist, Grillparzer and Hebbel, to a novelist like Gottfried Keller, had no reason to take a subordinate rank. But, in the nineteenth century, eminent writers were no longer, as in the cosmopolitan age of German classicism, sufficient to make a great literary period; there was also necessary a certain political concentration, a national life held together

by common aims, and this was wanting in modern Germany. If for no other reason, the closing period of our history, in which Germany appears at last as one nation, has a peculiar interest for the student; for, once more, with the help of French, Russian and Scandinavian models, the German mind has asserted itself as an original force among the literatures of Europe.[1]

It is not easy to express in a few words the peculiarities, the national characteristics, of this literature, whose position in relation to that of other Western nations we have attempted to define. In the first place, German literature is more composite than any other written in a single tongue.

Geographical distribution.

At the present day, it embraces the imaginative work of one-third of the population of the European continent; it is the literature, not only of the German Empire, but also of the eight millions who speak the German tongue in Austro-Hungary,[2] and the majority of the inhabitants of Switzerland.[3] Moreover, within the German Empire itself there exists a diversity of peoples and national temperaments—one might almost say of races—which adds considerably to the difficulty of definition. The literature of the Baltic coasts, for example, is as different from that of the Bavarian Highlands and of Austria as is that of France from Italy; and centres like Berlin, Munich and Vienna display wider variations in their literary tastes than are to be found throughout the whole English-speaking world.

General characteristics.

In spite of these initial difficulties, however, certain broad and general features may be distinguished, which are to be traced throughout the entire evolution of German literature. The question is most conveniently approached comparatively,

[1] Cp. R. von Gottschall, *Die deutsche Nationallitteratur des* 19. *Jahrhunderts*, 4 vols., 7th ed., Leipzig, 1900-02; R. M. Meyer, *Die deutsche Litteratur des* 19. *Jahrhunderts*, 2nd ed., Berlin, 1900, and the same author's *Grundriss der neuern deutschen Litteraturgeschichte*, Berlin, 1902.

[2] Cp. J. W. Nagl and J. Zeidler, *Deutsch-Österreichische Litteraturgeschichte*, 1, Vienna, 1899.

[3] Cp. J. Baechtold, *Geschichte der deutschen Litteratur in der Schweiz*, Frauenfeld, 1887.

by contrasting German letters with French. The literatures of these two nations—which, by a freak of history, began their political development together under the sway of one king—form the most striking contrast that is to be found within the Aryan family. According to the testimony of literary history, there would seem to be stronger bonds of intellectual sympathy between Germany and Spain or Italy, than between France and Germany; while French art and literature have always been more warmly appreciated and more successfully imitated by the Scandinavian than by the German peoples. English literature, on the other hand, is the result of too complicated an evolution to form as sharp an antithesis to either French or German literature as do these two to each other, while the Slavonic literatures have, to a large extent, imitated their western neighbours. Thus, it may be said that, as far as Europe is concerned, the two poles of literary expression are represented by France and Germany; here are concentrated the fundamental characteristics which distinguish what Madame de Staël called "la littérature du nord" from "la littérature du midi."[1] The poetic temperament of the Teuton, as compared with the Latin, is displayed in its naïvest, simplest form in the first of the two "cosmopolitan" epochs of European literature, in that of chivalry: the comparison is, moreover, simplified by the fact that both French and German poets treated the same themes, and had the same artistic ideals before them. The supreme qualities of the French romances of chivalry are those of style: even if a French epic is, as a whole, defective in proportion, its constituent parts are rarely without balance and proportion; practical and clear-minded, the French poet deals with facts and concrete ideas. The German poet of the same time proved, as we shall see, an apt pupil of his French masters, but the natural bent of his mind is none the less clearly to be seen beneath the veneer

[1] *De la littérature considérée dans ses rapports avec les institutions sociales*, Paris, 1800, 134.

of French imitation; however closely he may translate from the French, he is never reluctant to enlarge upon his original: not content to describe things as they appear to the outward eye, he reflects upon them, interprets them, and explains them. In spite of its rougher workmanship, the verse of Wolfram von Eschenbach or Gottfried von Strassburg consequently strikes an individual note which is not to be found in the French medieval writers. Thus, too, the Germans early displayed their supremacy in the lyric; deeply as they had been influenced by the Provençal poets, the Minnesingers put into their songs a subjectivity, a richness of sentimental feeling, which distinguishes them from the Troubadours.

As the centuries moved on, and the epic developed into the novel, the Minnesang into the modern lyric, and the feeling for nature awakened, national peculiarities became more emphasised. The relation, for instance, in which French prose fiction stands to German is only in a higher degree that in which Crestien de Troyes stood to Wolfram von Eschenbach. The German novelist of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries deals with feelings and thoughts rather than with actions and events; his aim, to which all else is sacrificed, is to follow out, in all its details, the growth of an individual; and his pen is at the service of subjective and personal ideas which he enforces with an insistence that often outsteps the bounds of æsthetic licence.

Or let us turn to the drama, and especially to comedy, which, in French literature, occupies a similar place to the lyric in German, or the novel in English literature. As a nation, the Germans are not deficient in the comic spirit; on the contrary, they are highly endowed with a deep and hearty humour; but their literature is, notwithstanding, deficient in good comedies of the highest order. This is due to the fact that comedy depends least of all on the expression of individual feelings and convictions; it is, in the first instance, a criticism of society. The representative German comedies—*Minna von Barnhelm* must be excluded, as being

modelled on the non-German comedy of the eighteenth century, such as Grillparzer's *Weh dem, der lügt*, or Wagner's *Meistersinger von Nürnberg*—are never, like the masterpieces of French or English comedy, purely objective; they express an individual standpoint which makes it impossible to bring them into the same line with the masterpieces of a Molière, Congreve or Goldoni.

The fundamental differences between French and German literature might be summed up by saying that the former is the supreme example of a social literature, while the latter is a literature of individualism. The unique position which Paris has always held in the intellectual life of the French nation has determined the character of French literature; the literary spirit, which attains its highest expression in the criticism of life, is essentially metropolitan. In Germany, on the other hand, the national life is divided over many capitals, and the nation's thought and literature centre in innumerable coteries. The German writer has never known a single tribunal of public opinion; he has thought as an individual and written for himself. Hence the literature he has produced is one in which the lyric, the most personal of all forms of literature, predominates, and where the epic or novel is employed to express purely personal feelings, ideas and desires. Even the drama, unless in a modified degree, in Austria, is not objective. At the same time, German dramatists are not exposed, like those of France, Spain or Italy, to the temptation of repeating themselves; and, consequently, a feature of the German drama is its varied character. Neither Goethe nor Schiller, Grillparzer nor Hebbel, has written two plays on exactly the same lines; the ability to make the same mould serve again and again, a talent possessed by all the masters of the Romance drama, is absent in German literature, or is, at least, restricted to subordinate talents such as Hans Sachs, Weisse or Kotzebue. Thus, in spite of its deficient bulk, the dramatic literature of the Germanic races is rich in initiative and originality.

Such being the outstanding characteristics of German literature, as they appear by contrast with the literatures of the Latin peoples, it is not difficult to infer what part the former has played in the evolution of European literature as a whole. The antithesis of Latin and Germanic, South and North, is, in art and poetry, expressed by the words "classic" and "romantic"; the Latin literatures, with their social background, are the representatives of rule and order, of classicism, while the Germanic spirit finds its most perfect expression in Romanticism. For the Latin nationalities, the great "Blütezeit" was the classical Renaissance, or a direct consequence of the Renaissance; in the north, the classical spirit—whether in the Germany of Opitz and Gottsched, in the Sweden of the eighteenth century, or, although naturally in a lesser degree, in England from the Restoration onwards —has invariably been a foreign growth which has harmonised but indifferently with the national temperament. And, in the same way, Romanticism has been equally strange on Latin soil; the word "romantique," it is true, is applied to the chief French movement of the nineteenth century, but it is open to question how far this movement represented an encroachment of the "littératures du nord," how far it was merely a revival of the spirit that animated the early Renaissance.

German literature in its highest national development has always been romantic—that is to say, individual, spiritual, lyrical: this is its importance and this explains its mission in the economy of European letters. And, just as the historian of French literature must keep constantly in view the social background, or as English literary history must take account of the national enterprise and independence of the Anglo-Saxon race, so German literature must be regarded pre-eminently as the literature of subjectivity and individualism.

PART I.

THE OLD HIGH GERMAN PERIOD

CHAPTER I.

EARLY GERMANIC CULTURE; THE MIGRATIONS.

In the growth of every national literature there is a period corresponding to what the ethnologist describes as a prehistoric age. This age of unwritten literature may, as in isolated civilisations, be synonymous with the age of unwritten history, but it is not always or necessarily the case. The modern nations of Europe, which grew up under the shadow of the earlier civilisations of Greece and Rome, had long emerged from prehistoric obscurity before they attained that stage of culture which permitted of a written literature: when the literary "prehistoric" period of modern Europe came to a close, the individual nationalities could already look back upon centuries of political history. Thus the first seven centuries of the history of England, and the first eight centuries, at least, of the history of Germany, are absolutely without literary records. There is no literature in Germany before the age of Charles the Great.

The Germanic races.

Of the successive waves of immigration on which the Aryans spread over Europe, that which bore the Germanic races was among the last. Whence the Aryans came is still a matter of uncertainty; when they came is a question we can never hope to answer. Of the earliest history of the Germanic peoples all that can be said with certainty is, that at the time Rome was beginning to assert herself in Southern Europe they were clustered round the shores of the North Sea and the Baltic: here, as early as the fourth century before Christ, an adventurous voyager of Marseilles, Pytheas by name, discovered them.[1] In this dim prehistoric age the

[1] Cp. K. Müllenhoff, *Deutsche Altertumskunde*, 1, 2nd ed., Berlin, 1890, 211 ff.; and W. Scherer, *Vorträge und Aufsätze*, Berlin, 1874, 21 ff.

The First Sound-shifting.

linguistic change known as the "First Soundshifting" (*Erste Lautverschiebung*), by which the consonantal system of the Germanic languages was sharply differentiated from that of the Aryan mother-tongue, had already taken place, and the accent of the word, originally free, as in Sanscrit or Greek, had become fixed upon the stem. The latter change was essential to the development of the primitive form of Germanic verse, which, as will presently be seen, depended on the alliteration of accentuated syllables.

East and West Germans.

The first important political change which took place in the group of peoples on the Baltic coast was probably a separation of the East Germans, namely, the Goths, and the races which were to populate Scandinavia, from the others, while these, moving slowly westward, were subsequently to figure in history as the West Germans. This West Germanic group of nationalities embraces the Frisians, Anglo-Saxons, Low Germans (in modern times represented by the Dutch and the Plattdeutsch-speaking peoples), and the High Germans. The immigration of these various races to the settlements they finally occupied was a matter of centuries. The Germanic invasion of Scandinavia began some centuries before the birth of Christ, but the Goths remained on the Baltic until as late as the end of the second century of our era, when they, too, were seized with the migratory instinct. They abandoned their old homes and, turning southwards, laid the foundation of a powerful empire on the lower Danube. The progress of the West Germanic races was no more rapid. The most westerly of the tribes had found no settled home when Cæsar came into conflict with them in the first century before Christ, and they were still in little better than a nomadic condition when the invasion of the Huns at the end of the fourth century threw the whole Germanic world into confusion.

Julius Cæsar, 55 and 53 B.C.

Cæsar has something to say of these Germanic barbarians, who, for more than half a century before his time, had been a source of vague terror to the Roman world; but his account[1] is meagre, and is written from the standpoint of a Roman general, who regarded it as presumptuous for a barbarian race to oppose the progress of Roman conquest. The most detailed description of the Germans with whom the

[1] *De Bello Gallico*, 6, 21-29.

Romans came into contact we owe to Tacitus, whose *Germania* was written towards the close of the first century of our era. Tacitus seems to have based his work upon authentic information, but there is something of the special pleading of a Rousseau in his description of these tall northern races with their fierce blue eyes and fair hair: his object was manifestly to bring the primitive simplicity of the German barbarians into sharp contrast with the effeminate luxury of Rome.

The *Germania* of Tacitus, A.D. 98.

It is improbable that the art of writing was known to the Germans whom Tacitus describes: their Runic alphabet, a rough imitation of some of the Latin letters, was not in general use for purposes of writing until, at the earliest, the end of the second century. But, like all primitive peoples, these ancient Germans had an unwritten poetry. "In old songs, their only history," says Tacitus, "they celebrate a god Tuisto, born of the earth, and his son Mannus as the ancestors of their race"; and, in the *Annals*, he tells us that they commemorated in song the deeds of their national hero Arminius. Another form of primitive song which Tacitus mentions is the *barditus*, a wild battle-cry or hymn sung with the shield to the mouth in order to give the sound additional resonance.[1] Further, the religious hymn and heroic song were combined with dances and solemn processions to form the most characteristic of all the "literary" forms of the ancient Germans, the *leich* (*laikas*), and from the *leich* to the beginnings of the drama was not more than a step. Besides hymns and war-songs, the Germans, at the time of which Tacitus writes, must have possessed the spells and magic charms which are characteristic of all primitive Aryan literatures. They had, too, their hymns for the dead, and from their Aryan home they undoubtedly brought with them dim nature-myths of the victory of the sun over darkness and storm, of spring over winter, the tragedy of the dying day or the waning summer—myths which at a later date loomed in the background of the great Germanic sagas.

Unwritten poetry.

It is to the Goths, an East Germanic people, which, as we have seen, had settled on the lower Danube, that we must look for the first awakening of intellectual life. Of all the Germanic races they had made the most rapid advances in

The Goths.

[1] Tacitus, *Germania*, 2, 3; *Annals*, 2, 88.

culture and civilisation, a fact in great measure due to their geographical position, which brought them into contact with Greek ideas and Christianity at a date when their kinsfolk in the north were still heathens and barbarians. The foundations for a literature in the Gothic language were laid by a single man, the Arian bishop Wulfila or Ulfilas: to him we owe the oldest monument of Germanic literature, the Gothic translation of the Bible. Wulfila, whose family was of Cappadocian origin, was consecrated Bishop of the West Goths or Visigoths in 341 at the age of thirty. Seven years later, to escape the persecution which his missionary work brought upon him, he led his people, the *Goti minores*, across the Danube into Mœsia, in the neighbourhood of the modern Plevna. He died at Constantinople either in the winter of 380-81 or in 383. The Emperor Constantius compared Wulfila to Moses: nowadays we should rather compare him to Luther. But even Luther's Bible seems a small achievement beside the herculean work of this Gothic bishop, who conceived the plan of translating the Bible into the vernacular of a people without a literature, without even a written alphabet. Wulfila had first to invent the very letters of the language in which he wrote; he had to adapt the Greek alphabet to Gothic sounds, supplementing its deficiencies from the Latin alphabet and from the runes. He probably did not translate more than the New Testament himself, perhaps only the four Gospels; and the translation of the Old Testament—according to a tradition, only the books of the *Kings* were omitted—was certainly not finished until after his death, but the entire work was inspired by him and rightly bears his name. Wulfila's Bible became the accepted canon of Gothic Arianism, and continued so until the beginning of the sixth century. The principal MS. is the Upsala *Codex argenteus*, a beautiful transcript of the four Gospels, written in silver and gold upon purple-stained parchment. Of the original 330 pages, however, only 187 are preserved. A few clumsily translated verses from *Ezra* and *Nehemiah* is all that remains of the Old Testament.[1]

Wulfila (311-381 or 383) and the *Gothic Bible*.

[1] The most convenient editions of the Gothic Bible are those of Stamm and Heyne, 9th ed., Paderborn, 1897, and of E. Bernhardt, Halle, 1875 and 1884. On Wulfila's life, cp. G. Kaufmann in *Zeitschrift f. deutsch. Altertum*, 27 (1883), 193 ff.; E. Sievers in Paul's *Grundriss der germanischen Philologie*, 2, 1 (1889), 67 ff.

Apart from the linguistic importance of the Gothic Bible, it possesses a high literary value, as being the first attempt to express in a Germanic language ideas wholly foreign to it. More than this, Wulfila's translation shows at times an appreciation of the poetic capabilities of the Gothic language, which can hardly be too highly estimated. It is not too much to say that Wulfila's Gothic possesses a literary grace and style which were not surpassed in any Germanic prose for more than a thousand years after his death.

Other Gothic remains.

Hardly any other specimens of the Gothic language have been preserved. The fragment of a Commentary—the so-called *Skeireins*—on the Gospel of St John, written in the sixth century, and a *Calendar* are the most important, but they possess no literary interest. Of Gothic poetry there is not a trace: the battle hymns, the epic lays celebrating the deeds of heroes and sung by minstrels to the accompaniment of the cithara,[1] have entirely disappeared, but it is improbable that they were committed to writing at all. In the fierce struggle for existence in which they soon became involved, the Goths lost the little intellectual prestige they had gained.

The Migrations, ca. 375-500.

Towards the close of the fourth century the Germanic races were thrown back into the unsettled life from which they had just begun to emerge. The Huns, a barbarous Mongolian race, burst into Europe from the east, and swept all before them. The Germanic nationalities either succumbed before them or, joining their hordes, were swept farther westward. It was the age of the so-called "Völkerwanderung" or "Migrations." The beginnings of an East Gothic or Ostrogothic empire in the south-east of Europe were destroyed, the Roman empire itself tottered to its fall, and, when quiescence began to return, we find the Ostrogoths in Italy, a Visigothic kingdom in Spain, Vandals in the north of Africa, and Germanic races in England. But the Huns, who had thus changed the face of Europe as it has never been changed again, had disappeared as suddenly and mysteriously as they had come.

Beginnings of the national epic.

Of a written literature in such an age there could be no question, but the struggles of the Migrations afforded a favourable soil for the growth of the epic. The famous deeds of the national heroes—of Ermanarich, of Odoaker, and, above all, of

[1] Jordanes, *De Origine Actibusque Getarum*, ed. Mommsen, Berlin, 1882, 5, 43.

the great Theodorich, who, as Dietrich von Bern (*i.e.*, Verona), is a central figure in the popular German literature of the entire middle ages—the annihilation of the Burgundians, and the fate of the Hunnish king Attila, were the materials out of which the German people welded their national epic. Little but a vague tradition of the primitive religion and the mythic heroes survived from the period before the Migrations, and that little was soon blended in the popular imagination with the great events of the more immediate past. As tranquillity returned, the Germanic races began to build up their national life afresh. A new poetry arose in the fifth and sixth centuries, dealing with the men and events uppermost in the nation's mind.

The *Nibelungensaga.*

The history of the Burgundians formed a middle point in the development of the national epic. This was a West Germanic race which had settled in the beginning of the fifth century in the valley of the Rhine; their king, Gunther, reigned at Worms. The richness of the land round Worms led to the Burgundians being connected in the popular imagination with an early mythical saga of a treasure that lay sunk in the Rhine. This treasure or "hoard" was watched over by the Nibelungs or children of mist and darkness, from whom Siegfried, the hero of light, the sun-god, had wrested it. But, like the day before the night, Siegfried had to succumb before the powers of darkness; and the Nibelung Hagen, at whose hands he fell, became associated in the later development of the saga with the Burgundian kings. A terrible fate, however, awaited the Burgundian people: in 437 the Huns swept down upon them and annihilated them; Attila, said the saga, would gain possession of the Nibelungs' hoard. Deep as was the impression which this catastrophe made upon the Germanic imagination, Attila's own end impressed it even more deeply: in 453 the king of the Huns was found dead in a pool of blood by the side of his newly wedded bride. Before long the popular mind had invested this incident with the dignity of an avenging destiny. It made out Attila's wife, who was a German, to have been the same Grîmhild whom Siegfried married, the sister of the Nibelungs whose fate was identified by tradition with that of the Burgundians. Thus Grîmhild had wrought "blood-vengeance" upon Attila for the murder of her kinsfolk.

In this early form, more myth than history, the *Nibelungen-*

saga spread over all Germanic lands, becoming in Scandinavia the basis of part of the *Edda*.[1] In the lays of the *Edda*, the Siegfried or Sigurd story retains more of the primitive, mythic character of the saga than in the later German versions. The Scandinavian Sigurd is of the mythical race of the Völsungs; he is brought up by a dwarf in ignorance of his parentage. He kills a dragon, wins the treasure over which it watches, and wakens the sleeping Valkyrie Brynhild, whom Odin has surrounded with a ring of fire upon a mountain summit. Leaving Brynhild, Sigurd comes to the land of Gunnar or Gunther, where he is given a magic potion which destroys his memory. He marries Gunnar's sister Gudrun, the Grîmhild of the German saga, and aids Gunnar to marry Brynhild. When the latter learns the deceit that has been practised upon her, that not her husband but Sigurd had won her in Gunnar's shape, she determines to take vengeance. She incites Gunnar against Sigurd; Sigurd is murdered and Brynhild shares his lot upon the funeral pile. To Gudrun it now falls to marry Âtli, the king of the Huns. With the object of obtaining possession of the hoard, Âtli invites Gudrun's kinsfolk to his Court, where they are all murdered, without, however, revealing in what part of the Rhine they have sunk their treasure. With the terrible revenge which Gudrun takes upon her husband, giving him the blood of his own children to drink and stabbing him in his bed, the *Nibelungensaga*, as it is told in the *Edda*, closes. These lays originated in Scandinavia, and more particularly in Iceland, between the middle of the ninth and the middle of the eleventh centuries, but in Germany it was the twelfth century before the story of the Nibelungs crystallised into final literary form as the *Nibelungenlied*.

The *Edda* (ca. 850-1050).

[1] Editions of the *Edda* by F. Jonsson, Halle, 1888-90, and B. Sijmons, 1, Halle, 1888; also in G. Vigfusson and F. J. Powell, *Corpus Poeticum Boreale*, 1, Oxford, 1883.

CHAPTER II.

CHRISTIANITY. LITERARY BEGINNINGS UNDER CHARLES THE GREAT.

THE political history of the West Germanic races on the Continent, in the centuries immediately succeeding the Migrations, is summed up in the growing preponderance of the Franks. Although the Ostrogothic empire in Italy promised for a brief period under Theodorich the Great to revive the glory of the old Roman empire, it had ultimately to yield to the Franks under their Merovingian kings. In the reign of Chlodwig (481-511) the Frankish kingdom was greatly extended, and towards the middle of the sixth century it embraced not merely the Romanised peoples of Gaul, but all the West Germanic races on the Continent except the Saxons and the Frisians.

The High German Sound-shifting.

Between the fifth and seventh centuries another great consonantal change came over a group of the West Germanic dialects. This was the "Second" or "High German Sound-shifting," virtually a repetition of the first process by which, as we have seen, the Germanic languages had been differentiated from the primitive Aryan language. The Second Sound-shifting affected the dialects of Bavaria and Alemannia in their entirety, as well as a part of the Frankish dialect—namely, the East, Rhine and Middle Frankish.[1] These dialects, which were ultimately to form the literary language of Germany, are

[1] The chief feature in the Second Sound-shifting is the conversion of the tenues (*t, p, k*) into the corresponding affricates and spirants (*z, s; pf, f; h, ch*); this is characteristic of all High German dialects, while the shifting of the mediæ (*d, b, g*) to the corresponding tenues was mainly limited to the Upper German dialects of Bavaria and Alemannia. The Germanic spirants (*th, f, ch*) —with the possible exception of *th*, which appears in High German as *d*—were not affected by the High German Sound-shifting.

henceforth distinguished as High German, while the dialects of North Germany and Holland are known as Low German.

The Merovingians (ca. 480-750).

In the history of German culture, the Merovingian period (ca. 480-750) is marked by the infiltration of Roman civilisation and Roman ideas. But susceptible as the Merovingian Franks were to Roman influence, they did not allow themselves to become Latinised; they retained their Germanic character. Latin, however, was the language of the State as it was of the Church, and even the beginnings may be traced of a literature in Latin. This general adoption of the Latin language had one great advantage: it brought the Franks into touch with the outer world; above all, it paved the way for Christianity. Missionaries had found their way into Alemannia as early as the sixth century, but it was a hundred years later before Christianity began to take root. Under Chlotar II., in the beginning of the seventh century, Columbanus and Gallus came over from Ireland—the land of light in those dark ages — and fought a hard battle for the faith in Alemannia; and, at a somewhat later date, Christianity began to make converts in Bavaria. The new religion widened the imagination of the people and enriched their vocabulary with new expressions, but at the same time it discountenanced the old ballads and sagas, which savoured too much of heathenism. It is questionable, however, if the Church did more than retard by a few generations the growth of a secular literature. For the sagas were kept alive in the songs of the people, and remained unaffected by the decrees of ecclesiastical authorities. Their later development shows how vital the tradition must have been.

Christianity.

Bonifacius (ca. 680-755).

At first the Church made attempts to replace the vernacular by Latin, but it was only at first. It soon became clear that, if the hearts of the people were to be reached at all, it would need to be through their native tongue. A decree by the great "Apostle of the Germans," the Anglo-Saxon Winfrith or Bonifacius (ca. 680-755), issued in 748, expressly enjoined that "every priest shall require from persons about to be baptised, a clear statement in their mother-tongue of the Confession of Faith and the Renunciation of the Devil," and the translation of important parts of the Church ordinances was frequently insisted upon in later statutes. It is thus natural that the earliest connected records of the German

language should have been translations of the Liturgy; at the same time, none of those which have come down to us can with certainty be traced back beyond the age of Charles the Great. The need of bridging over the gulf that separated Latin from the language of the people gave rise at an earlier date to German glosses, as an aid to the translation of Latin manuscripts. By far the oldest of these are the so-called *Malbergischen Glossen* to the *Lex salica*, in Low Frankish of the sixth century. The two most important collections are, however, the so-called *Keronische Glossar* to a Latin dictionary, and the *Vocabularius Sancti Galli*, which contains glosses to Isidore, Aldhelm, and other writers. Both belong to the earlier half of the eighth century, and were probably originally Bavarian; the *Keronian Glossary* served, however, as a basis for a number of later glossaries in other dialects (*Pariser Glossen*, *Reichenauer Glossen*, *Hrabanische Glossen*).[1]

Old High German glosses.

More important, from a literary point of view, are the two so-called *Merseburger Zaubersprüche*,[2] perhaps the only wholly pre-Christian verses in the German language. The first of these "charms"—they are in rude alliterative verse—gives us a glimpse of the old German "Idisi," the "Valkyries" of the Scandinavians, who watch over the fortunes of war; the second is a charm by which Wodan cures Balder's horse of lameness. But the MS. of the *Merseburg Charms* dates only from the tenth century.

The *Merseburger Zaubersprüche*.

In Charles the Great the best traditions of the Roman emperors were revived. A warrior and a born leader of men, a great lawgiver and a far-seeing patron of the spiritual and intellectual advancement of his people, Charles gathered up in himself all that was best in his predecessors, and made a magnificent reality out of what to them had been only an impracticable ideal. And the seat of his revival of Cæsarian empire was neither Byzantium nor Rome: it was amongst rude barbarians whom the Romans had despised, but barbarians in whose hands lay the future of the continent of Europe. Although long before Charles the Great's time Rome had ceased to be the unique political capital of the world, it

Charles the Great (742-814).

[1] E. Steinmeyer and E. Sievers, *Die althochdeutschen Glossen*, 1 (Berlin, 1879) and 3 (1895), 1 ff. Cp. R. Koegel, *Geschichte der deutschen Litteratur*, 1, 2, Strassburg, 1897, 426 ff.

[2] K. Müllenhoff and W. Scherer, *Denkmäler deutscher Poesie und Prosa aus dem 8.-12. Jahrhundert.* 3rd ed., Berlin, 1892, 1, 15 ff.

still controlled the world's destinies, and the coronation of Charles in 768 virtually meant the restoration of Rome to her old supremacy. Under the protection of this new empire in the West, the breach between Rome and Byzantium became complete: the capital of the Christian faith shook itself free from the city of Constantine. Before the new Rome lay a vista of spiritual dominion compared with which the territorial magnitude of the old Roman empire seemed small.

Charles the Great remained all his life a faithful son and servant of the Church, and his earliest cares, when he came to the throne, were devoted to religion. The hold which Christianity had had upon the people under the Merovingian dynasty was still slight, and missionary work lacked discipline and organisation. Charles, fully aware of the weak points, proceeded at once to reinforce the existing ecclesiastical legislation by new ordinances. He heartily endorsed the principle upon which Bonifacius had insisted, namely, that religious ceremonies, the understanding of which was of importance to the laity, should be conducted in the vernacular, and several small literary fragments from the close of the eighth century and beginning of the ninth—baptismal vows, fragments of prayers, paternosters, credos, for the most part in High German dialects [1] — were directly due to Charles's recommendations and legislation. The chief specimen of this group is the *Weissenburger Katechismus*, which consists mainly of translations of the Lord's Prayer with commentary, of the Apostolic and Athanasian Creeds, and of the *Gloria in excelsis*. It is written in the same Rhine-Frankish dialect in which Otfrid wrote his *Gospel Book* a generation later.

Translations of the Liturgy, Catechism, &c.

Intimately bound up with Charles the Great's ecclesiastical reforms were his far-reaching schemes for the advancement of learning. With the aid of the great Alcuin (ca. 735-804) he established a kind of university at his Court, and brought the highest learning of the time within the reach of his subjects. He inspired the clergy with the zeal for earnest scholarship which had been hitherto unknown in the German monasteries. The fruits of this scholastic activity, so far as they were expressed in German, have mainly a linguistic interest. The most important is a lengthy fragment of an excellent

Scholastic activity.

[1] Müllenhoff and Scherer, *l.c.*, I, 198-209; P. Piper, *Die älteste deutsche Litteratur* (D.N.L., I [1885]), 81 ff.

translation into Rhine-Frankish of the tract *De fide catholica contra Judæos* by Isidorus. The same translation is also to be found in part in another codex, the *Monseer Fragmente*, so-called from the monastery of Monsee in Upper Austria, where the copy was made. Besides the tract by Isidorus, the Monsee codex contains a fragment of the Gospel of *St Matthew*, a sermon, *De vocatione gentium*, on the text that God may be prayed to in all languages, and the seventy-sixth Sermon of St Augustine, all in the same Rhine-Frankish dialect.[1] These translations, although they date from the earliest years of Charles the Great's reign, are the best specimens of Old High German prose from the Carlovingian period. To find a writer worthy of being placed beside the translator of the *Monsee Fragments*—it is difficult to believe that there was more than one hand engaged in the work—we have to turn to the St Gall monk Notker, more than two hundred years later. In this group of scholastic literature may also be included several interlinear versions of Latin works, such as the twenty-six *Murbacher Hymnen*, a Tegernsee *Carmen ad Deum*, and fragments of various *Psalms*. The *Benedictine Rule* (*Benediktinerregel*) was also glossed at St Gall between 800 and 804.[2]

The *Monseer Fragmente.*

Having once admitted the vernacular into its liturgy, the Church began to interest itself in popular verse. Latin ecclesiastical poetry was gradually degenerating into a mere jingle of words, and it was only a question of time for a poetry in German to take its place. The earliest example of an interest in such poetry on the part of the clergy is the *Wessobrunner Gebet* from a MS. which formerly belonged to the monastery of Wessobrunn in Bavaria. On the last two pages of this MS., which contains a strange medley of monastic lore in Latin, are to be found under the heading *De poeta* some twenty-one lines of German. The fragment begins with the following nine lines of alliterative verse:—

The *Wessobrunner Gebet*, ca. 780.

"Dat gafregin ih mit firahim firiuuizzo meista,
Dat ero ni uuas noh ûfhimil,
noh paum noh pereg ni uuas,
ni . . . nohheinîg noh sunna ni scein,

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[1] G. A. Hench, *The Monsee Fragments*, Strassburg, 1890; also by the same editor, *Der althochdeutsche Isidor* (*Quellen und Forschungen*, 72), Strassburg, 1893. Cp. P. Piper, *l.c.*, 93 ff.

[2] Cp. P. Piper, *l.c.*, 105 ff., and *Nachträge* (D.N.L., 162 [1898]), 22 ff.

noh mâno ni liuhta, noh der mâreo sêo.
Dô dâr niuuiht ni uuas enteo ni uuenteo,
enti dô uuas der eino almahtîco cot,
manno miltisto, enti dâr uuârun auh manake mit inan
cootlîhhe geistâ. enti cot heilac." . . .[1]

Here the verses break off abruptly, and are followed by the fragment of a prayer in prose. There is not, as was formerly believed, anything pre-Christian in the ideas expressed in these lines; their theme is obviously the beginning of the first chapter of *Genesis*, with possibly a reminiscence of the second verse of the ninetieth *Psalm*. But they retain something of the epic grandeur and reverential awe of the early Germanic imagination: the heathen spirit is there, although disguised in the garb of the new faith. The dialect of the poem is Bavarian, but such forms as *dat* and *gafregin* point to a Saxon original. This original was probably written from memory by a Bavarian monk. The MS. dates from the end of the eighth century, but the original may have been considerably older.

From a poetic beginning like the *Wessobrunn Prayer* to verses on secular themes was only a step. As early as 789 a capitular was issued forbidding nuns "to write or send *winileodos*," and with these *winileodos* may possibly be identified the beginnings of German love poetry: in any case, the *winileod* was a secular popular song as opposed to the religious poetry of the Church. With the exception, however, of a half Latin fragment of the eleventh century[2] and the so-called *Liebesgruss* in the Latin epic *Ruodlieb*, no lyrics have been preserved from the Old High German period. The *Winileod*.

Although insisting upon the strictest discipline within the monasteries, Charles the Great was not intolerant of the secular element in the germinating literature of his reign. Indeed, so far from showing intolerance, he was fully aware that the preservation of his own memory lay in the hands of the popular singers: he accordingly commanded that the

[1] "Das erfuhr ich unter (den) Menschen (als der) Wunder grösstes, dass (die) Erde nicht war noch (der) Überhimmel, noch Baum noch Berg [nicht] war, nicht . . . kein . . . noch (die) Sonne schien, noch (der) Mond leuchtete, noch die herrliche See. Als da nichts war (von) Enden noch Wenden (*i.e.*, Grenzen), [und] da war der eine allmächtige Gott, (der) Männer mildester und da waren auch mit ihm manche gute Geister. Und Gott heilig. . . ." The text is that of W. Braune, *Althochdeutsches Lesebuch*, 4th ed., Halle, 1897. Cp. Müllenhoff and Scherer, *l.c.*, 1, 1 f.; P. Piper, *l.c.*, 139 ff.

[2] The so-called *Kleriker und Nonne*. Cp. R. Koegel, *l.c.*, 1. 2, 136 ff.

songs of the people should be collected and preserved.[1] This collection is lost, but a fragment of an alliterative "Heldenlied," preserved in a copy made by two monks of the monastery of Fulda about 800, affords an idea of the kind of poetry which Charles's collection would have contained. This is the *Hildebrandslied*, the lay of Hildebrand and Hadubrand.[2]

The *Hildebrandslied*, ca. 800.

> "Ik gihôrta" (so begins the poem) "ðat seggen,
> ðat sih urhêttun ænôn muotin,
> Hiltibrant enti Haðubrant untar heriun tuêm."

The old Hildebrand and the youthful Hadubrand stand opposed to each other in the course of battle. The old man asks his opponent his father's name. "My father," replies Hadubrand, "was Hildebrand, my name is Hadubrand." A faithful vassal of Theodorich, Hildebrand had fled with him from the wrath of Odoaker and found refuge with the Huns. The old warrior is now on his way back to the home where he had left wife and child thirty years before. He doubts no longer that it is his own son who stands before him, and joyfully offers him the arm-rings which he has received as gifts from the great Attila. But Hadubrand, with the impetuosity of youth, only sees in the old man's story an excuse to avoid a conflict:—

> "Hadubrant gimahalta, Hiltibrantes sunu:
> 'mit gêru scal man geba infâhan,
> ort widar orte. . . .
> dû bist dir, altêr Hûn, ummet spâhêr,
> spenis mih mit dînêm wortun, wili mih dînu speru werpan.
> pist alsô gialtêt man, sô dû êwîn inwit fuortôs.
> dat sagêtun mî sêolîdante
> westar ubar wentilsêo, dat inan wîc furnam:
> tôt ist Hiltibrant, Heribrantes suno.'"

The conflict between father and son is unavoidable:—

> "Welaga nû, waltant got" (cries Hildebrand), "wêwurt skihit.
> ih wallôta sumaro enti wintro sehstic ur lante,
> dâr man mih eo scerita in folc sceotantero:

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[1] Einhard, *Vita Caroli Magni* (ed. P. Jaffé, Berlin, 1876), cap. 29.

[2] Müllenhoff and Scherer, *l.c.*, 1, 2 ff.; P. Piper, *l.c.*, 142 ff. The dialectic peculiarities of the text are explained on the assumption that the original was Low German and written from memory by a High German; the Fulda monks (East Frankish dialect) then copied this High German version. The fragment consists of sixty-eight lines.

sô man mir at burc ênîgeru banun ni gifasta,
nû scal mih suâsat chind suertu hauwan,
bretôn mit sînu billiu, eddo ih imo ti banin werdan." [1]

The fight begins, but the MS. breaks off and leaves us in ignorance as to how it ends. There is, however, little doubt that the close was tragic; the youthful warrior falls by his father's hand, like Sohrab by Rustem's in the similar Persian saga.

Like the Scandinavian *Edda* and the Anglo-Saxon epic *Beowulf*, the *Hildebrandslied* is composed in alliterative verse. In this, the oldest metrical system of Germanic poetry, the line is divided rhythmically into two halves. These two half-lines are connected by alliteration,—that is to say, the syllables upon which most stress is laid in reading or singing the lines begin with the same letter or sound. Each line has usually three such alliterating syllables, two in the first half and one in the second, but there may be only two. All initial vowels alliterate indifferently with one another, and consonantal combinations such as *sc*, *sp*, and *st*, are regarded as single sounds. Alliterative verse.

The *Hildebrandslied* is an example of the rough, uncouth ballad out of which the German national epic was, at a much later date, to be constructed. There is no Homeric breadth here, there are no literary graces; in place of them we find a directness of speech, a fierce dramatic intensity and a grim irony, which are to be sought for in vain in less primitive literature. But the *Hildebrandslied* stands alone; the fragmentary Anglo-Saxon *Waldere*, which is evidently a translation of an Old High German lay, is the only other evidence we possess of a national epic in the Carlovingian age.

[1] "Ich hörte das sagen, dass sich (als) Kämpfer allein begegneten Hildebrand und Hadubrand zwischen Heeren zwei" (ll. 1-3). "Hadubrand sprach, Hildebrands Sohn: Mit Gere soll man Gabe empfangen, Spitze wider Spitze. Du bist [dir], alter Hunne, unmässig schlau. . . . Lockst mich mit deinen Worten, willst mich mit deinem Speere werfen, bist so (ein) alt gewordener Mann, so du ewigen Betrug (im Schilde) führtest. Das sagten mir Seeleute, die westwärts über das Meer (die Wendelsee) kamen, dass ihn der Kampf hinraffte: tot ist Hildebrand, Heribrands Sohn" (ll. 36-44). "Wolan nun, waltender Gott, Wehgeschick geschieht. Ich wallte (der) Sommer und Winter (*i.e.*, der Halbjahre) sechzig ausser Landes, wo man mich immer auslas in (das) Volk (der) Krieger, ohne dass man mir bei irgend einer Burg den Tod [nicht] gab: nun soll mich (mein) liebes Kind (mit dem) Schwerte hauen, (mich) niederstrecken mit seiner Streitaxt, oder ich ihm zum Tode werden" (ll. 49-54).

CHAPTER III.

CHARLES THE GREAT'S SUCCESSORS. BIBLICAL POETRY.

It was hardly to be expected that Charles the Great should have had a successor of such character and intellectual breadth as himself. At his death in 814, the responsibilities of the empire fell upon the shoulders of his son, Ludwig the Pious. Earnest and clear-headed as Ludwig was, he had but little of his father's kingly genius; he was essentially a man of peace and a Churchman. The strong religious bent of his mind was not, however, detrimental to the best interests of literature. He may have subordinated the intellectual life of his time to the Church, in a manner which his father would not have countenanced, but in the ninth century, it must be remembered, there was still no hope of a literature outside the Church. An important event of Ludwig's reign was the rise of the monasteries, among which that of Fulda soon took up a leading position. Fulda became the Tours of the North, and the greatest men of the age flocked to it, to sit at the feet of Alcuin's most distinguished scholar, Rabanus Maurus. The ideas of education which Rabanus Maurus put into practice were broad and liberal; he was faithful to the best traditions of the reign of Charles the Great, and, himself a poet, he showed no clerical contempt for the language of the people. To his direct instigation is probably to be traced an East-Frankish translation, made at Fulda, of the *Evangelienharmonie* of Tatian, or rather, of a Latin Gospel Harmony compiled according to the *Diatessaron* of Tatian.[1] This translation, which dates from the fourth decade of the ninth cen-

Ludwig the Pious, 814-840.

The *Evangelienharmonie* of Tatian, ca. 835.

[1] Ed. E. Sievers, 2nd ed., Paderborn, 1892. Cp. P. Piper in D.N.L., 1, 120-125.

tury, cannot, however, be compared, for accuracy or literary qualities, with the translations of the Monsee codex.

The eyes of the clergy were gradually opening to the power which a literature in the popular tongue might exert in the service of the Church, and it would have been surprising had they not soon employed their literary activity in something more than glossing and translating. In point of fact, the ninth century — the brightest in the Old High German period — stands out as the age of the two earliest Christian epics in a European vernacular, the Old Saxon *Heliand*, and the *Evangelienbuch* of Otfrid, the latter the earliest German poem in rhymed verse.

In 1562 Mathias Vlacich, or Flacius, a zealous Protestant theologian, intent on proving that the ideas of the Reformation were not new, unearthed, it is not known where, a *Præfatio in librum antiquum lingua saxonica conscriptum*, together with some Latin verses concerning the same "ancient book in the Saxon tongue." According to this *Præfatio*, Ludwig the Pious commissioned a Saxon who possessed a certain reputation as a poet, to translate the Bible into German verse. The Latin verses, which are evidently of later date, only repeat the story which Bede relates of Cædmon: a peasant watching his flocks falls asleep under a tree, and is commanded by a voice from heaven to interpret the Word of God in his own tongue. However apocryphal these verses may be, there is no reason to doubt that the epic poem of all but 6000 verses which its first editor entitled *Der Heliand* ("The Saviour"), and the recently discovered fragments of *Genesis*, are portions of the Old Saxon poetic version of the Bible, which is referred to in the *Præfatio*.[1]

The Old Saxon *Heliand* and *Genesis*, ca. 830.

Concerning the author of this Biblical poem or the locality where it was written, we have no definite information. A generally accepted view is that it was the work of a monk of the monastery of Werden; but if the poet was a monk at all, which seems doubtful, he was too deeply versed in the technicalities and style of the popular epic, to have spent his entire life within the cloisters. He may perhaps have entered a monastery in later years, but there seems little doubt

[1] *Heliand*, mit Glossar herausgegeben von M. Heyne. 3rd ed., Paderborn, 1883; *Die altsächsische Bibeldichtung*, herausgegeben, von P. Piper, 1, Stuttgart, 1897. Cp. also P. Piper in D.N.L. 1, 159-186.

that he was in the first place what the Anglo-Saxons called a *scop*, a wandering singer. The home of the poet ought also perhaps to be sought farther north and nearer the sea than Werden. It is not altogether clear how this Biblical epic was composed: traces of a familiarity with the best exegetical works of the time are unmistakable, but it is doubtful if the poet's acquaintance with these authorities was at first-hand: he may, as has been recently suggested, have simply based his poem upon a collection of homilies. In any case, there is no slavish adherence to the letter of the commentaries.[1] The date of the composition of the *Heliand* and *Genesis* is approximately 830; with considerable certainty it may be said that they were not written before 822 and not later than 840.

The *Heliand* a Germanic epic.

To the old Saxon poet, Christ is a king over His people, a warrior, a mighty ruler. Episodes such as the entry into Jerusalem on the ass, which were inconsistent with the Saxon singer's idea of kingly dignity, are omitted or passed lightly over: humility and resignation could hardly be accounted virtues in his eyes. The Christ of the *Heliand* is a hero of the old Germanic type, an ideal of courage and loyalty, and His disciples are noble vassals from whom He demands unflinching loyalty in return. Like the kings in the epic of *Beowulf*, He shows His graciousness by distributing rewards and arm-rings. The background of the events in the *Heliand* is the flat Saxon land with the fresh North Sea, familiar to the poet and his hearers: "Nâzarethburg," "Bethleêmaburg," "Rûmuburg," called up more vivid, if more homely, pictures than any description of Palestine or Rome; the marriage at Cana and Herod's birthday feast become drinking-bouts in the hall of a Germanic prince.

The Biblical story is thus transferred to the *milieu* of the Germanic epic, but it is surprising that the poem is not in this respect even more realistic than it is: as a matter of fact, the Saxon poet preserves the spirit of the New Testament more faithfully than Heinrich von Veldeke some centuries later preserves that of the *Æneid*. And although the *Heliand* is essentially didactic in purpose, its poet never forgets that he is, in the first place, not a preacher but a singer; he has the

[1] Cp. F. Jostes' papers in the *Zeitschrift f. deutsch. Altertum*, 40 (1896), 160 ff., and 341 ff.; A. E. Schönbach's article on *Deutsches Christentum vor tausend Jahren* in *Cosmopolis*, 1 (1896), 605 ff., and R. Koegel, *l.c.*, 1, 1, 276 ff.

artist's power of making his story dramatic and interesting. The *Heliand* is thus a genuine epic. Early Christian poetry has nothing that surpasses in vividness the Saxon poet's description of Herod's feast, or the storm upon the Sea of Galilee; it has little that approaches the solemn grandeur of the Sermon on the Mount or the scene on the Mount of Olives. Lines like the following show the poet's power of rendering the more solemn tones of the Gospel narrative:—

"'Ik mag iu tellian,' quat hie 'that noh uuirðit thiu tîd cuman,
that is afstandan ni scal stên obar ôðrum,
ac it fellit ti foldu, endi it fiur nimit,
grâdag lôgna, thoh it nu sô guodlîc sî,
sô uuîslîco giuuaraht, endi sô duot all thesaro uueroldes giscapu,
teglîdit gruoni-uuang.' Thuo gengun im is iungron tuo,
frâgodun ina sô stillo, 'Huo lango scal standan noh,' quâthun sia,
'thius uuerold an uuunnion, êr than that giuuand cume,
that thie lasto dag liohtes scîne
thuru uuolcansceon, eftha huann is thîn eft uuân cuman
an thesan middilgard, manno cunnie
te adêlianne, dôdun endi quikun,
frô mîn thie guodo? ûs is thes firiuuitt mikil,
uualdandeo Crist, huann that giuuerthan sculi.'"[1]

Old Saxon Biblical poetry bears witness to that intimate intercourse between the Continental and English Saxons which, still existing in the ninth century, enriched the old German speech with so many new words. The poet of the *Heliand* was undoubtedly familiar with the beginnings of a religious epic in England, and his poem was in turn read by Anglo-Saxons. A large part of the Anglo-Saxon *Genesis* is, in fact, merely a translation of the Old Saxon *Genesis*.[2] The *Heliand* is the last great poem in alliterative verse in a West Germanic

[1] "'Ich kann euch erzählen,' sagte er, 'dass die Zeit noch kommen wird, dass davon (*i.e.*, von dem Tempel) nicht (ein) Stein über (dem) andern stehen soll, sondern er fällt zur Erde, und Feuer ergreift (*lit.*, nimmt) ihn, gierige Lohe, obgleich er jetzt so stattlich ist, so weislich bereitet; und gleiches thun alle Schöpfungen dieser Welt; die grüne Aue vergeht.' Da gingen seine Jünger zu ihm, fragten ihn so stille: 'Wie lange soll stehen noch,' sprachen sie, 'diese Welt in Wonnen, ehe dann die Wende kommt, dass der letzte Tag (des) Lichtes durch (den) Wolkenhimmel scheine? oder wann ist deine Absicht, auf dieses Erdenrund wieder zu kommen, (der) Menschen Geschlecht zu richten, Tote und Lebendige, Herre mein, der gute? Uns ist dessen grosse Neugier, waltender Christ, wann das werden solle'" (ll. 4280-4293).

[2] That part of the Anglo-Saxon *Genesis* is a translation from the Old Saxon was first conjectured by E. Sievers in 1875, and corroborated nearly twenty years later by K. Zangemeister's discovery of fragments of the Old Saxon *Genesis* in the Vatican. Cp. K. Zangemeister and W. Braune, *Bruchstücke der altsächsischen Bibeldichtung* in the *Neue Heidelberger Jahrb.*, 4 (1894), 205 ff.

language, and this, together with the fact that it was written in a dialect incomprehensible to the great mass of the people, militated against any widespread popularity. As far as the Germans of the tenth century were concerned, the *Heliand* might have been written in a dead language; but it stands out, nevertheless, as the greatest poetic achievement in the European literature of its time.

When in 840 Charles the Great's first successor died, forsaken and forlorn, in a tent on an island in the Rhine, a storm of war and dissension had already broken over the empire. The two sons of Ludwig the Pious, Ludwig and Charles, who were in revolt against their father, now turned upon each other, and only when a common enemy appeared in the person of their brother Lothar, did they amicably join forces and agree to a division of the empire. In 842 the two brothers met at Strassburg and solemnly swore mutual allegiance, Ludwig taking the oath in the Romance tongue of the Western Franks, Charles in the German tongue, which his brother's followers understood. These *Strassburger Eide*[1] form an outstanding landmark in the history of both France and Germany; they mark the division of the Carlovingian empire, the first step in the independent development of the two leading nations of the European continent. A year later, by the Treaty of Verdun, Ludwig, known henceforth as Ludwig the German, became acknowledged ruler of the "Kingdom of the Eastern Franks," while Charles ruled over the Western Franks. Ludwig the German (843-876) proved a more liberal-minded patron of literature than his father had been; he had something of Charles the Great's wide intellectual sympathies, and preferred to have men of education around him. The Germanisation of the liturgy and ordinances of the Church went on apace during Ludwig's reign, and the monasteries were unwearied in providing glosses to Latin manuscripts.

The *Strassburger Eide*, 842.

Ludwig the German, 843-876.

One of the most interesting fragments of Old High German literature belongs, in the form in which it has been preserved, to Ludwig the German's reign. This is the so-called *Muspilli*, one hundred and six lines of alliterative verse in the Bavarian dialect, which are written on the spare sheets of a beautiful Latin manuscript known to have been in the possession of

Muspilli.

[1] Müllenhoff and Scherer, *l.c.*, 1, 231 f.; P. Piper, *l.c.*, 133 ff.

the king himself.[1] It is tempting to see in this fragment a description of the Germanic "Muspilli" or "World Destruction," to find in it a remnant of the old heathen religion in the guise of the Christian Apocalypse. The battle between the angels and the spirits of darkness for the souls of the dead at the Last Judgment is, for instance, depicted with an imaginative grandeur which is foreign to medieval Christianity, while Elijah fighting with the Antichrist suggests the Scandinavian Thor's destruction of the Serpent of Midgard :—

"Sô daz Eliases pluot in erda kitriufit,
sô inprinnant die pergâ, poum ni kistentit,
ênîc in erdu, ahâ artruknênt,
muor varswilhit sih, suilizôt lougiu der himil.
mâno vallit, prinnit mittilagart. . . .
dâr ni mac mâk andremo helfan vora demo muspille."[2]

But there is, after all, nothing in the *Muspilli* which cannot be traced to canonical sources; the Christian ideas have only passed through the Germanic imagination and become tinged with the grandeur of a pre-Christian heroism.

As the reign of Ludwig the Pious had been marked by one great poem on the life of Christ, the *Heliand*, so that of his successor stands out as the age of the second German Messiad—namely, the *Evangelienbuch* or "Gospel Book" of Otfrid. But while the *Heliand* is written in alliterative verse and looks backward to the heroic age, then disappearing rapidly before Christianity, Otfrid's poem stands at the beginning of a new epoch; it is suffused with the meekness of the new religion, and its thoughts are set to the music of modern poetry.

Otfrid, ca. 800–870.

Otfrid, the first German poet whose name is known to us, was monk and priest in the Alsatian monastery of Weissenburg. Born probably about the beginning of the century, he studied for some years as a young man under Rabanus Maurus in Fulda, and ultimately rose to be the head of the convent school in Weissenburg. He was still alive in 868, about which date, or some years earlier, his work was completed. The motive which prompted the writing of the *Liber*

His *Evangelienbuch*, ca. 868.

[1] Müllenhoff and Scherer, *l.c.*, 1, 7 ff.; P. Piper, *l.c.*, 149 ff.

[2] "Wenn des Elias Blut auf (die) Erde träuft, so entbrennen die Berge, (es) steht nicht irgend ein Baum auf Erden, (die) Bäche vertrocknen, (das) Meer verschluckt sich, (es) verbrennt in Lohe der Himmel, (der) Mond fällt, (es) brennt (die) Erde . . . da mag nicht (ein) Verwandter (dem) andern helfen vor dem Untergang der Erde" (ll. 50-57).

evangeliorum theotisce conscriptus[1] was similar to that which called forth the *Heliand*—namely, a desire to combat the love of heathen poetry in the laity, by winning their interest for stories from the Bible written in their own tongue. But Otfrid was far from being as successful as his Saxon predecessor. He had nothing of the spontaneity of the born singer; he made no attempt to imitate the popular epic. Above all, he was a monk, and a monk learned in the exegetical literature of his time. He set about his work with the conscious intention of the scholar who wished to give his countrymen an epic similar to those which Juvencus, Sedulius, and Arator had written for readers of Latin.

Otfrid's verse.

The High German Soundshifting had hastened the end of alliterative verse in South Germany. With regard to the form of his poem, Otfrid had no choice; he was compelled to abandon alliteration, and to adopt in its place rhyme, with which the Church hymns had already made him familiar. He virtually retained, however, the alliterative verse form, namely, the long line broken in the middle, but, instead of using alliterative syllables, he made the half verses rhyme with each other. Two long lines form a strophe. The whole poem is divided into five books, and each book into a number of smaller divisions which correspond with the pericopes or lessons of the Church service. While it is mainly to his adaptation of rhyme to German verse that Otfrid owes his position in German literature, it would be unjust to deny him altogether the possession of higher poetic powers. Overladen as his work is with theological learning, and hampered, especially in the earlier part of the poem, by technical difficulties, there are here and there in his verse flashes of genuine lyric feeling which deserve to be lifted out of the dry religious didacticism in which they are imbedded. In lines like the following, the note of the German national lyric is not to be mistaken:—

"Uuolaga elilenti, harto bistu herti,
thu bist harto filu suâr, thaz sagên ih thir in alauuâr.
Mit arabeitin uuerbent, thie heiminges tharbênt;
ih habên iz funtan in mir, ni fand ih liebes uuiht in thir;

[1] Ed. O. Erdmann, Halle, 1882; selections in P. Piper, D.N.L., 1, 186 ff. On Otfrid see especially A. E. Schönbach's papers in the *Zeitschrift f. deutsch. Altertum*, 38-40 (1894-96), and in *Cosmopolis*, 1, 605 ff.

Ni fand in thir ih ander guat, suntar rôzagaz muat,
sêragaz herza ioh managfalta smerza.
Ob uns in muat gigange, thaz unsih heim lange,
zi themo lante in gâhe ouh iâmar gifahe:
Faramês sô thie ginôzâ ouh andara strâza,
then uueg, ther unsih uuente zi eiginemo lante."[1]

Otfrid's mysticism.

Otfrid had no small share of the characteristic Germanic love for mysticism; he delighted in that quest for hidden meanings in Scripture which the Alexandrine Jews of the third century had introduced into Biblical exegesis; he dwelt not only upon the moral application of the Gospel story, but upon its spiritual and mystic sides. This mysticism might have added to the poetic beauties of Otfrid's poem, had the work not been conceived in such a sordidly didactic spirit. The *Evangelienbuch* lacks entirely that intimate sympathy with old German life which is to be found in the *Heliand*. Otfrid's Christ, however, is no less a German king than the Saxon Christ; the Jewish towns are "burgen," and John the Baptist fasts "in waldes einote"—an expression that foreshadows Tieck's "Waldeinsamkeit." But the fire of the Germanic epic is gone, and the mild peace and also the prosaic homeliness of the cloister have taken its place. As an epic, the *Gospel Book* of Otfrid cannot be compared with the *Heliand*, but it is, nevertheless, a literary monument of the first importance; its influence upon both the language and the metrical forms of German poetry may be traced through at least two centuries; from it some of the chief streams in the national literature take their beginning.

Later religious poetry.

With Otfrid, Old High German poetry reaches, we might say, its culminating-point, and the scanty religious fragments of the latter half of the ninth and the beginning of the tenth century stand completely in the shadow of the *Evangelienbuch*. Generally speaking, the literary tendency of Ludwig the German's reign was in the direction of a freer, more imaginative treatment of religious themes. This is apparent, not only in the *Muspilli*, but in such post-Otfridian poems

[1] "Ach (du) Fremdland! sehr hart bist du, du bist gar sehr schwer, das sage ich dir fürwahr. Unter Mühsalen leben dahin (die), die (der) Heimat entbehren. Ich habe es an mir erfahren (*lit.*, gefunden), nicht fand ich etwas Liebes an dir. Nicht fand ich an dir anderes Gutes, ausser traurigen Sinn, weherfülltes Herz und mannigfaltigen Schmerz. Wenn uns in den Sinn kommt, dass uns heim verlangt, (wenn uns) auch Sehnsucht nach dem Lande plötzlich ergreift, (so) fahren wir, wie die Genossen, [auch] eine andere Strasse, den Weg, der uns zu (unserem) eignen Lande führe" (I, 18, ll. 25-34).

as the *Bittgesang an den heiligen Petrus*, *Christus und die Samariterin*, the *Lied vom heiligen Georg*, and a Bavarian version of the 138*th Psalm*.[1]

After the death of Ludwig the German in 876, the kingdom of the Eastern Franks was again at the mercy of dissension within and foes without, and German literature, which has suffered perhaps more than other literatures from the nation's checkered political history, lost completely the small vantage-ground it had gained. As regards poetry under the last Carlovingians, there is little to say. The victory of young Ludwig III. over the Normans at Saucourt, in 881, elicited a German song in his honour, the so-called *Ludwigslied*, in which the king is celebrated as the champion of heaven;[2] the author was evidently a Rhine-Frankish monk. The decay of the Carlovingian empire is to be seen in the readiness with which men's thoughts reverted to the great Charles. A Saxon singer, the "Poeta Saxo," celebrated, between 888 and 891, the deeds of Charles (*De gestis Caroli*) in Latin verses, and a "Monk of St Gall," whose name is unknown, wrote, between 884 and 887, a Latin life of the great king which often throws a more vivid light on his personality than Einhard's biography. But German king although he was, Charles the Great never became in Germany what he was among his Latin subjects, an epic hero and the central figure of a poetic literature; the only German poems in which he plays a leading part are adaptations from the French.

The *Ludwigslied*, 881.

[1] Müllenhoff and Scherer, *l.c.*, 1, 21 f., 22 ff., 31 ff., 35 ff.; also P. Piper, *l.c.*, 261 ff.

[2] Müllenhoff and Scherer, *l.c.*, 1, 24 ff.; P. Piper, *l.c.*, 257 ff.

CHAPTER IV.

LATIN LITERATURE UNDER THE SAXON EMPERORS. NOTKER. THE LITURGIC DRAMA.

WITH the accession of Heinrich I. German literature received a check which undid the slow achievement of generations. The High German tongue, and especially that Frankish dialect of it which Otfrid wrote, was just beginning to be recognised as the literary language of the East Frankish kingdom when the light of courtly favour was suddenly withdrawn from it. The new dynasty was a Saxon race of kings who held their Court amidst a Low German people, to the north of the Harz Mountains. This, however, is not in itself sufficient to explain the disadvantage at which literature was placed in the tenth century. Under the feeble rule of the later Carlovingians, the struggle of the German peoples for existence had begun anew. First, Normans had made victorious inroads into the kingdom, then came Slavs and Danes, and then, like a second Hunnish invasion, the Hungarians swept down upon the eastern frontiers. The conflicts of the Migrations seemed about to repeat themselves when the strong hand of the Saxon kings saved the empire. It was manifestly no age for literature, but the literary undercurrent was strong, and only awaited a favourable opportunity to make itself felt. In the Carlovingian age the Saxons, as we have seen, possessed in the *Hildebrandslied* and the *Heliand* a vigorous national poetry, and it was undoubtedly the Saxon race that kept the national epic alive. But the struggles of the tenth century filled the popular imagination with new poetry and gave it new heroes, and these were by degrees ingrafted upon the older traditions,

The Saxon emperors, 919-1024

just as, centuries before, the heroic poetry of the Migrations had blended with the prehistoric sagas.

In spite of the stormy times, we might have possessed actual proofs of this Saxon epic tradition, had the conditions for literature been as favourable at the Saxon Court as they had been at that of the Carlovingians. But the early Saxon kings cared little for literature—the first Heinrich could neither read nor write, Otto I. not until late in life,—and when the "Saxon Renaissance" did set in, it was restricted to a literature in Latin, inspired by Greek and Byzantine ideas. Otto the Great had other things to do than to foster literature: it was he who laid the real foundations of the "Holy Roman Empire" and gave Germany the leading voice in European politics for the remaining centuries of the middle ages; he first inspired the German people with a sense of unity and of national greatness. But of a national literature the Saxon emperors knew practically nothing, and not a single poem in the German tongue has been preserved from a period of more than a century and a half.

The "Spielleute."

The only healthy sign in this, the darkest age of German poetry, was the growing importance of the "Spielleute" or "Gleemen." These "wandering folk" (*diu varnde diet*), as they were called at a later period, were the virtual descendants of the old Roman *histriones* and *mimi;* they were the jesters and mountebanks to whom the people looked for their entertainment. But they were more than jesters, more even than the gossips and news-bearers of their age; they also took the place of the *scops* or rhapsodists who, centuries before, had sung at the Courts of Gothic kings. Now, under the Saxon emperors, these wandering singers began to recover something of the prestige which their pre-Christian forerunners had enjoyed. In the dark centuries the "Spielleute" were the real bearers of epic traditions, the true preservers of the national poetry. But of this poetry we possess nothing that is older than the twelfth century; our knowledge of it comes only from indirect sources, and from Latin versions made by monks in the seclusion of monasteries.

For the monasteries remained, now as under the Carlovingians, the only abiding-places for intellectual life: here alone could a written literature find refuge. After the death

of Rabanus Maurus in 856, the glory of Fulda was eclipsed by that of Reichenau, which in turn had to yield to the Alemannian monastery of St Gall. All through the tenth and a considerable part of the eleventh century, St Gall was one of the great fountainheads of light north of the Alps. Under the Saxon emperors, literature, scholarship, and music owed more to this monastery than to any other. Notker the Stammerer, the first of three famous monks of St Gall who bore the name Notker, perfected the "Sequentia," a form of religious poetry of French origin; it consisted of Latin verses adapted to the modulations sung after the word "Hallelujah" in the Gradual of the Mass. A *Lobgesang auf den heiligen Gallus* (ca. 890), ascribed to Ratpert of St Gall, was long popular among the people, but it has only been preserved in a Latin translation;[1] and about a hundred years later, Notker Labeo, the third Notker, once more made this monastery famous in literary annals by his translations. But the greatest debt which literature owes St Gall is the Latin version of the *Lay of Walther of Aquitaine*, the *Waltharius manu fortis*,[2] a poem which was written by Ekkehard of St Gall about 930, and revised a century later by another Ekkehard—the fourth of that name in the records of the monastery.

St Gall.

Waltharius, ca. 930.

The *Waltharilied* describes an episode in the lives of Walther of Aquitaine and his betrothed, Hildegund of Burgundy, both of whom were held as hostages by the Huns. They escape from Attila's Court, and after forty days' wandering reach the Rhine near Worms. Gunther, the Frankish king, whose vassal, Hagen, has also been a hostage, learns of their return, and lays claim to the treasure with which Walther's horse is laden. To enforce his claim, Gunther sets out with twelve chosen vassals in pursuit of Walther and Hildegund, and overtakes them in a wild defile of the Vosges Mountains. Here Walther slays eleven of these vassals one after the other, each of the combats being fully described by the poet, with a skilful avoidance of repetition. Hagen and the king alone are left, and on the following day both fall upon Walther together. After a desperate struggle all three are disabled.

[1] Müllenhoff and Scherer, *l.c.*, 1, 27 ff.

[2] Ed. J. V. Scheffel and A. Holder (with German translation), Stuttgart, 1874, and by H. Althof, 1, Leipzig, 1899; the latter has also published a translation, Leipzig, 1896.

Peace is made, and Walther brings bride and treasure home in safety.

Ekkehard wrote *Waltharius* as an exercise in Latin verse, while still an "unfledged scholar" in the convent: it takes, however, a high place, perhaps the highest, among the epics of medieval Latin literature. The *Waltharius* is not, as was once supposed, a mere translation of some lost Old High German epic; and if Ekkehard had any written version of the story before him at all, it was most likely one in Latin prose. His poetic style is modelled upon Virgil and Prudentius; the polish of the Latin hexameter and the classic sense of proportion, generally lacking in medieval literature, give an appearance of artistic ripeness to the poem which is in some measure spurious. The heroic spirit in the *Waltharilied* is still unsoftened by the courtesies of medieval chivalry, but through the fierce life which it describes there runs a strain of almost modern tenderness. One might seek long through pre-Renaissance literature to find anything more beautiful than Ekkehard's description of the eve of the final combat, when Hildegund, singing to keep herself awake, watches by her sleeping champion through the first half of the night, while the latter keeps watch over her during the second.[1] But the tenderness here is not Germanic; it is rather the antique tenderness of Virgil. Ekkehard's poem has not the virility of the Middle High German epics; the reader is spared the long uninteresting passages which occur in the latter, but he also misses their rough vigour and freshness. The issues of *Waltharius* are narrower; its ideas are illumined, not by the sun and moon of the real world, but by the subdued artificial light, half classical, half monkish, of the Ottonian Renaissance. After all, the chief value of this poem is that it is the only specimen of a German heroic saga that has come down to us from a period of more than three centuries. Of a Latin version of the *Nibelungen* saga, written at the command of Bishop Pilgrim of Passau at the close of the tenth century, nothing has been preserved.

The *Ecbasis captivi*, ca. 940.

Another Latin poem is the *Ecbasis captivi* ("The Flight of the Captive"),[2] which was written in leonine hexameters, about 940, by a German monk of Toul in Lorraine. This poem has

[1] Lines 1172-1187. The entire poem is only 1456 verses long.
[2] Ed. E. Voigt in *Quellen und Forschungen*, 8, Strassburg, 1875.

a particular interest as forming the first link in the chain of the "Beast Epic" in European literature. The naïve embodiment of popular satire, in which animals are the *dramatis personæ*, sprang partly from the Greek and oriental fable-lore associated with Æsop's name, partly from the allegories of the Alexandrian *Physiologus* of the second century: it was one of the favourite vehicles of satire in the age of the Reformation, and retained its hold upon the imagination of the Continent for long after. An idle monk, on whom the monastic reforms of the tenth century weigh heavily, resolves, so the introduction to the *Ecbasis captivi* tells us, to atone for his past sloth by composing a poem. He relates, as a kind of allegory of his own life, the story of a calf which, escaping from its tether, wanders into the forest and falls into the clutches of a wolf. The wolf, like a monk weary of fasting, rejoices in the prospect of a good meal; but he grants the calf respite until the following morning. When the morrow comes, the herd, in its search for the missing calf, appears before the wolf's den, and with the aid of the fox's cunning—which is further exemplified by the fable of the sick lion, told at great length by the wolf—rescues the calf.

Hrotsuith of Gandersheim, ca. 930-1000.

The writings of the nun Hrotsuith or Roswitha (born ca. 930), of the Saxon monastery of Gandersheim, are characteristic of the literary and religious spirit of the Ottonian renaissance, but they belong to a history of Latin rather than of German literature. Her six dramas,[1] written with a view to supplanting Terence in the monasteries, are legends in dialogue rather than dramas, but the dialogue has often genuinely dramatic qualities: it is handled with a naturalness and skill which were not surpassed by the humanistic dramatists of the sixteenth century. In these plays Hrotsuith enforces the purity of life which Terence made light of. They are essentially dramas with a purpose, but the authoress is at the same time not afraid of embellishing them with a piquancy which is hardly in keeping with that purpose. Probably, however, without this piquancy Hrotsuith would have had little chance of successfully rivalling the Roman dramatist.

Besides the *Ecbasis captivi*, other Latin literature of this period bears witness to the eagerness with which the German

[1] Ed. K. A. Barack, Nürnberg, 1858; a translation by O. Pilz in Reclam's *Universal-Bibliothek*, No. 2491-92.

mind seized upon the anecdotes, fables, and jests which intercourse with the south of Europe had brought within its reach. The sequences preserved under the names *Modus florum*, *Modus Liebinc*, *De Lantfrido et Cobbone*,[1] are examples of an anecdotal literature which, from this time on, continued steadily to increase until, in the age of the Reformation, it reached its high-water mark. A short political poem, *De Heinrico* (ca. 984),[2] on Duke Heinrich of Bavaria, Otto I.'s brother, may also be mentioned here: it is written in alternating Latin and German lines which are connected by rhymes and assonances.

Latin sequences.

De Heinrico, ca. 984.

Ruodlieb, ca. 1030.

The most important evidence of the literary activity of the Spielleute is to be found in the Latin epic *Ruodlieb*,[3] written about the year 1030 in the Bavarian monastery of Tegernsee. *Ruodlieb* is the first romance of adventure, the oldest novel, in European literature; it stands, it might be said, upon the threshold of the medieval renaissance which was to sweep over Europe in the coming centuries. Thus it belongs, properly speaking, rather to the Middle High German than to the Old High German epoch. *Ruodlieb* is a purely German poem in Latin garb; we seek vainly in it either for the classical reminiscences or the classical form of *Waltharius*. It is characteristically medieval in its fondness for realistic detail; its author takes as much delight in describing the knightly costumes and ceremonials of his time as any Middle High German Court singer. But *Ruodlieb* is not only a forerunner of the Court Epic; with even more justice it may be placed at the head of that lower anecdotal epic with which the Spielleute were especially associated in Middle High German times: the realism, again, with which the life of the common people is described, makes it the earliest example of that peasant poetry which culminated in the thirteenth century in *Meier Helmbrecht*. It is thus possible to discover in *Ruodlieb* the germs of the greater mass of Middle High German narrative poetry. The basis of the story is one of those cosmopolitan anecdotes for which the Spielleute show so strong a preference. A young man of noble birth leaves his home to seek in distant lands the honours that are

[1] Müllenhoff and Scherer, *l.c.*, I, 40 ff.
[2] Müllenhoff and Scherer, *l.c.*, I, 39 f.
[3] Ed. F. Seiler, Halle, 1882. A German translation by M. Heyne, Leipzig, 1897.

denied him in his own. He meets a huntsman who brings him to the court of a king, where he is successful not only in the chase but as a leader in battle. After the lapse of ten years, a letter arrives from his mother, begging him to return to her. The king asks him what remuneration he desires for his services, and he chooses wisdom rather than riches. The king thereupon gives him twelve wise maxims, but at the same time does not let him depart without more material reward. He presents him with two loaves of bread, not to be cut until he reaches home; in these loaves are concealed money and treasures. The poet evidently intended to lead his hero through twelve adventures illustrating the truth of the king's maxims, but only three are narrated, and then the story loses itself in other issues. Of the multifarious elements which are thus loosely thrown together to form *Ruodlieb*, one is taken from the old Germanic "Heldensage," namely, an episode from the life of a King Ruodlieb, whom we find again two centuries later in the *Eckenlied;* and although it is not expressly mentioned, it was evidently intended that the hero should bear this name, Ruodlieb. Of the author nothing is known. From the poem itself, it has been inferred that he was of noble birth, spent his best years at the Court of Heinrich II., and retired to the monastery of Tegernsee only in later life. Whatever truth there may be in these suppositions, it must be admitted that the stamp of actuality is strong upon the poem; kings and courts, women and peasants, are not seen in such vividly realistic colours through the narrow windows of a cloister. The poet of *Ruodlieb* was clearly more man of the world than monk.

Notker, ca. 952-1022.

In this age of exclusively Latin culture, Notker III., Notker the German, or Notker Labeo ("the thick-lipped"), as he was variously called (ca. 952-1022), the head of the convent school of St Gall, occupies a unique position: he was, as far as is known, the only scholar of his age who took a warm interest in the language of the people. He revived that form of activity which, since the decay of the Carlovingian dynasty, had fallen into abeyance in the monasteries, the interpretation of Latin works in the vernacular. Notker, however, was a schoolman rather than a theologian; the books he selected for translation, his method of retaining or introducing Latin words and phrases, presumably familiar to his scholars, point

to an essentially pedagogic object in his work. Besides several writings in Latin, we possess German versions by Notker of Boethius's *De consolatione philosophiæ*, of Aristotle's *Categories* and *Hermeneutics*, of the remarkable allegorical treatise, *De nuptiis Philologiæ et Mercurii* by Marcianus Capella, a Neoplatonist of the fifth century, and, most popular of all, a translation and commentary of the *Psalter*. A few shorter writings, collected under the title *De musica*, are distinguished from his other works by being exclusively in German. It is unfortunate, however, that the most interesting of Notker's translations, those of the *Disticha Catonis*, of Virgil's *Bucolica*, and the *Andria* of Terence, have not been preserved.[1] Notwithstanding the admixture of Latin in his prose, Notker is a master in the use of the vernacular: he is the only prose-writer in older German literature, with the exception of the unknown translator of *Isidorus*, who may be said to have possessed a style. His choice of words reveals fineness of taste, the balance of his sentences a feeling for rhythm, which it would be difficult to parallel in any German writer earlier than the eighteenth century.

Notker's style.

Before leaving this first period in the history of German literature, it is necessary to look for a moment at the origins of a literary *genre* which was not, however, to play any considerable part in German poetry for more than six hundred years—the drama. The modern European drama, like the drama of the Greeks, was religious in its origin; but it sprang from the liturgy of the Church, and not from the old, indigenous religion, which was too soon and too completely effaced by Christianity to leave upon literature more than a few uncertain traces. The earliest dramas in all European literatures are liturgic. As far back as the tenth century, the Easter and Christmas services of the Church were invested with a certain dramatic character: the sacred events were narrated in the form of a dialogue between two priests. A certain part of the church represented, for instance, the Holy Sepulchre; the burial of Christ on Good Friday was symbolised by a cross wrapped in cloths and deposited in this place; and on Easter Sunday, two priests dressed as

The origin of the drama.

[1] P. Piper, *Die Schriften Notkers und seiner Schule*, Freiburg, 1882; also in D.N.L., 1, 337 ff.

angels announced to the women who came to the empty grave seeking Christ: "*Non est hic, surrexit sicut prædixerat, ite, nunciate, quia surrexit de sepulchro.*" This was the starting-point for the development of the later Easter and Passion Plays.

These representations at Easter and Christmas soon became more elaborate, but for long they remained essentially part of the Church service. It is thus not to them, but to the celebrations of the Epiphany, that we must look for the first step towards a secularisation of the drama. The elements of these latter representations—the Wise Men before Herod, the Slaughter of the Innocents, the Flight into Egypt—being of a less solemn nature, admitted more readily of secular treatment. A German *Dreikönigsspiel* of this kind in Latin verse has been preserved from the eleventh century. As time went on, these plays were collected into cycles; events of less immediate bearing on the story were interpolated; the books of the Old Testament, more especially those of the Prophets, were drawn upon. Thus, in the course of the eleventh and twelfth centuries, the liturgic drama gradually assumed the proportions of a "world drama," in which the whole religious cosmogony of the age was embodied. *Isaac and his Sons* was the theme of a drama of the twelfth century, and in 1194 a great representation was given at Regensburg, the subject of which was the creation of the angels, the dethronement of Lucifer, the Creation, the Fall, and the prophecies. A *Spiel vom Antichrist* from the monastery of Tegernsee is a good example of the "Antichrist Plays" of the twelfth century; it reflects faintly the national spirit of the German empire under Barbarossa, for it is a German Kaiser who here rules over the earth at the end of things.

Epiphany Plays.

Antichrist Plays.

As the religious drama grew more secular and elaborate, two changes became inevitable, the exclusion of the plays from the churches and the use of the language of the people. The first of these changes took place in the twelfth century, the scene of the performances being removed in the first place to the adjacent churchyards. But the Latin tongue was not so easily ousted; in fact, no form of literature so long resisted the inroads of the vernacular as the drama. Even as late as the thirteenth century all that was German in these religious

plays consisted of hymns which were obviously intended to be sung by the spectators.[1]

But this brings us far beyond the limits of Old High German literature. With Notker of St Gall, who stands alone in his age without immediate predecessors or successors, the first period in the history of German literature comes to a close. It is in no sense a great period; with the exception of a few fragmentary verses which mirror the ancient Germanic imagination, Old High German literature has little or no poetic worth. The only great literary monument of the period, the *Heliand*, is written in a Saxon, not a High German dialect. Thus, the most that can be claimed for the literature of these centuries is that it casts a faint and fitful light upon the intellectual evolution of the German people, under the Carlovingians and the Saxon emperors. The interest which it possesses for us to-day is not literary but linguistic.

[1] Cp. E. Wilkens, *Geschichte der geistlichen Spiele in Deutschland*, Göttingen, 1872; L. Wirth, *Die Oster- und Passionsspiele bis zum 16. Jahrhundert*, Halle, 1889; R. Froning, *Das mittelalterliche Drama*, D.N.L., 14. 1, 2, and 3 [1892].

PART II.

MIDDLE HIGH GERMAN LITERATURE

1050–1350

CHAPTER I.

ASCETICISM. THE BEGINNINGS OF THE POPULAR EPIC.

THE eleventh century was hardly more favourable for German literature than the tenth had been. The brilliant political history of the Saxon emperors had found, as we have seen, no echo in popular poetry; and the monastic reforms which, issuing from the Burgundian monastery of Cluny, gradually spread over Europe until, towards the close of the eleventh century, they were thundered from the papal throne by Gregory VII., were even less favourable to literary production than the Ottonian renaissance had been. But, on the other hand, a return to the strict letter of the Benedictine Rule was urgent for the credit of the Christian faith, and many of the best features of medieval life—the outburst of scholasticism in France, for instance, the enthusiasm that led the flower of Europe to the Holy Sepulchre—may be traced back to the Cluny reforms. The fact, however, remains that, in the beginning, this spirit of reform created a breach between the secular and religious life, which made progress impossible: its asceticism fell like a blight upon literature. The classical poets whom the monks had read in the tenth century now lay undisturbed in the cloister libraries, and the scholarly activity of monasteries like St Gall died completely out.

Monas reform.

The beginnings of these monastic reforms had already been lightly reflected in the *Ecbasis captivi* of the monk of Toul, in the tenth century; their depressing influence is first seen in the literature of the following one. What little poetry was written, only reiterated the disconsolate cry, "Memento mori!" A poem on "the contempt for the world," to which this title, *Memento mori*, has been given, is a sermon in verse on the un-

The poetry of asceticism.

certainty of human life and the vanity of worldly possessions; it was probably written about 1070 by an Alemannian monk. The same spirit breathes through a description in rhythmical prose of *Himmel und Hölle*, and has left its mark on other prose fragments of the time. The fullest expression, however, of this asceticism is to be found in a long poetic exposition of the Nicene Creed, entitled *Vom Glauben*, which was written early in the twelfth century by Hartman, a monk or lay brother of some convent of Central Germany. Hartman rails with the bitterness of a recluse against the secular spirit which, with the rise of knighthood, was beginning to permeate all classes of society. Love, honour, beauty, learning—all is vanity, he preaches; only the solitary hermit lives the highest life, the life of the heavenly seraphim.

Hartman's *Vom Glauben*.

One of the oldest poems of this period is the *Lied* of Ezzo, a scholastic of Bamberg; it was composed about 1060 or a little later, at the command of Bishop Gunther of Bamberg, a famous Churchman who led an ill-starred pilgrimage to the Holy Land, more than thirty years before the first crusade. Ezzo sings in glowing verses, which might well have served to inspire those early crusaders, of the beginning of things, of Christ's life and miracles, and of His death upon the cross. The *Song of Songs*, *Das hohe Lied*, was paraphrased and commented upon in German about 1060, by Willeram, an abbot of Ebersberg in Bavaria. Willeram's language, freely interspersed, as it is, with Latin words, has something of the beauty of Notker's. His paraphrase, and also fragmentary translations of the *Psalms* by other hands, show that the good seed sown by Notker had not altogether fallen on barren ground.

The *Ezzolied*, ca. 1060.

Willeram, ca. 1060.

Here and there, as in two Biblical poems, *Judith* and *Die drei Jünglinge im Feuerofen*, written in Central Germany, perhaps as early as 1060, a childlike delight in the narrative makes the poet forget that he is a monk: in such poetry the influence of the Spielmann is unmistakable. But the Spielmann himself, with his popular lays, his jests and love-songs, was naturally discountenanced: his place was disputed by wandering monks, who had learned the Spielmann's art, but knew better how to adapt it to the religious temper of the time. Until late in the twelfth century, literature came either directly from the cloisters or from these

Biblical narrative.

clerical Spielleute. Comparatively little secular influence is to be found in a poetic version of *Genesis*, the so-called Vienna *Genesis*, by an Austrian monk; while in an *Exodus*, which belongs to about the same period, there are occasional reminiscences of the German national epic. These scanty literary remains, — to which may be added the so-called *Merigarto*, a fragmentary exposition of monkish geography, and one or two prose versions of the *Physiologus*—are all that can with confidence be ascribed to the last half of the eleventh and the first quarter of the twelfth century, that is to say, to the reigns of Heinrich IV. and Heinrich V.[1]

Linguistic change.

Although the revival of medieval literature may thus be traced back almost to the middle of the eleventh century, the linguistic change which divides Old High German from Middle High German was hardly accomplished before the beginning of the twelfth century; for practical purposes the chronological boundary between the dialects may be placed in the year 1100. The change which about this time spread over the High German dialects, affected in a marked degree those flectional endings in which Old High German was particularly rich; the varied range of vowel sounds of the older language gave place, for the most part, in Middle High German to *e*.[2] From the end of the eleventh century onwards, High German is the dominant literary language of the German races, and the literary renaissance of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries was essentially High German.

The history of the twelfth century after 1125 has to deal mainly with a continuation of those beginnings which have just been considered, but, with each succeeding decade, the literary development was more rapid. Once more the ascetic spirit, this time mingled with satire, in which one detects the retaliation of a losing cause, appears in a poem entitled *Von des tôdes gehugede* ("Remembrance of Death"), by Heinrich, a lay

Heinrich of Melk, ca. 1150.

[1] Müllenhoff and Scherer, *l.c.;* P. Piper, *Die geistliche Dichtung des Mittelalters*, D.N.L., 3, 1 [1888]. Willeram has been edited by J. Seemüller in *Quellen und Forschungen*, 24 and 28, Strassburg, 1877-78; cp. P. Piper in D.N.L., 1, 446 ff. The *Exodus* will also be found in *Quellen und Forschungen*, 57, Strassburg, 1886, edited by E. Kossmann.

[2] The plural of the substantive *tac* ("day"), for example, is in Old High German, N.A. *tagâ*, G. *tagô*, D. *tagum;* in Middle High German, N.A. *tage*, G. *tage*, D. *tagen*. In the same way, the present of the verb "give" is in Old High German, *gibu, gibis, gibit, gebamês, gebet, gebant;* in Middle High German, *gibe, gibes(t), gibet, geben, gebet, gebent*.

brother of the Austrian monastery of Melk, who wrote about the middle of the century. Perhaps by the same poet is the more didactic *Priesterleben*, in which the life of the priests is satirised as severely as that of the laity was satirised in the *Remembrance of Death*.

"Marien-dichtung." The poetic worship of the Virgin opened up a new source of lyric inspiration to the German religious poet. Two German sequences on this theme from the monasteries of Muri in Switzerland and St Lambrecht in Styria may even be as old as the beginning of the twelfth century. The "cult of the Virgin" does not, however, begin to assert itself in German poetry before the middle of the century (*Arnsteiner Marienleich*, *Melker Marienlied*). Towards 1170, a Bavarian priest, Wernher by name, wrote three *Liet von der maget* (*Lieder von der Jungfrau*),[1] which are among the most genuinely poetic productions of the time. The current of lyric feeling held back by asceticism finds a legitimate outlet in this "Mariendichtung"; the Virgin becomes the object of a lyric adoration; she is the "Queen of Heaven," the "Gate of Paradise," the "Star of the Sea." Here, too, the trend towards mysticism, the most salient feature in the intellectual movement of the twelfth century, finds literary expression.

Mysticism. The theological mysticism of this age was also the soil from which sprang poems like the *Pater noster*, *Von der Siebenzahl*, and *Von den vier Rädern*. The author of the last-mentioned allegory, in which the "four wheels" of Aminadab's chariot symbolise Christ's birth, death, resurrection, and ascension, was another Wernher, a mystic of the Lower Rhine. The so-called *Summa theologiæ* and *Anegenge* ("Beginning"), both written probably in Austria not earlier than 1170, draw their imagery mainly from the writings of the Flemish mystic Hugo de St Victor. A fondness for mystic interpretation is even to be found in narrative poems of this epoch. The *Vorauer Genesis*, written perhaps as late as 1130 in an Austrian monastery, is saturated with mysticism: where the poet of the older *Vienna Genesis* was content to narrate, the poet of this *Genesis*—who was evidently familiar with his predecessor's version—interprets and explains. There is little doubt that a continuation of the Old Testament from *Exodus* to *Joshua*, preserved in the same Vorau MS., is by the poet of the

[1] Ed. J. Feifalik, Vienna, 1860.

Genesis. The *Leben Jesu*, *Von den Gaben des heiligen Geistes*, *Vom Antichrist*, and *Vom jüngsten Gerichte*, again, by a Frau Ava, who wrote in Austria, are free from scholastic or mystic influences, but do not reach a very high poetic level.[1]

Frau Ava.

The Legend forms a kind of bridge between the religious and secular poetry of the twelfth century, and it is usual to regard the *Annolied*,[2] written in the district of the Lower Rhine, in the first half of the century, as the earliest example of this form of poetry in Middle High German literature. Anno II. was an Archbishop of Cologne who played a great *rôle* in the political life of his time, fighting on the side of reform in ecclesiastical matters. Some twenty or thirty years after his death in 1075, his biography was written in Latin, and after the lapse of another decade or two, it was made the subject of a German poem of 876 lines, by a clerical poet of the monastery of Siegburg. This poem, of which, however, we only possess a reprint of the seventeenth century, is the so-called *Annolied*. Like the *Ezzolied*, the *Lay of Anno* goes back to the Creation, and dwells on the Fall, the Redemption, and the spread of Christianity. Then, after describing the founding of Cologne, the poet passes to the history of its archbishop and sings his life, his death, and the miracles that happened at his grave. Although it is difficult to justify the epithet "Pindaric" which Herder applied to the *Annolied*, it must be admitted that it occasionally catches the tone of the national epic of more than a hundred years later. It has a vigour and sincerity which make up for the want of finer poetic graces.

The *Annolied*, ca. 1130.

The *Kaiserchronik*,[3] although so rarely read nowadays, is one of the most interesting poetical productions of the period. In more than 18,000 lines it unrolls the history of the Roman kings and emperors, "unze an diesen hiutigen tac" ("to the present day")—that is to say, to the close of the first crusade under Konrad III. in 1147. There is not much literary distinction in the endless confusion of legend and history, of

The *Kaiserchronik*, ca. 1130-50.

[1] The majority of the smaller literary remains referred to above will be found in Müllenhoff and Scherer's *Denkmäler;* P. Piper in D.N.L., 3, 1 (already referred to), gives extracts from the more important of the longer poems.

[2] Ed. J. Kehrein, Frankfurt, 1865. Cp. P. Piper, *Die Spielmannsdichtung* 2 (D.N.L., 2, 2 [1888]), 1 ff.

[3] Ed. E. Schröder in the *Monumenta Germanica*, Berlin, 1892; P. Piper, in D.N.L., 2, 2, 182 ff.

romance and anecdote, which makes up this work, but it mirrors, as no other poem does, the spirit and temper of the twelfth century. The *Kaiserchronik* was obviously inspired by the Church; the point of view from which it regards history is a theological one; Christianity and heathendom are brought into the sharpest conflict, and the burning ecclesiastical questions of the day have left their marks upon it. But, essentially monastic as the *Kaiserchronik* is, it throws an important light on the secular life of its time; the old heroes of the Germanic sagas find a place in it, and there is more than an echo in its verses of the Crusades and the rise of chivalry; one may even find here a foreshadowing of those ideals of "Frauenminne" which were to inspire the poets of the following century. The parts of the *Kaiserchronik* to which a modern reader turns with most interest are the legends embedded in it. One of these, the legend of *Sylvester* (ll. 7806 ff.), is also preserved in another form, and that of *Crescentia* (ll. 11352-12808), poetically the most interesting of all, has been edited as a separate poem. An extract has even been made from the *Annolied* in the beginning of the *Chronicle*. The *Kaiserchronik* represents the work of several hands: all that can be said with any certainty of its authorship is that it may have been begun as early as 1130, and was completed in Regensburg about the middle of the century. It is also not improbable that the same Konrad to whom we owe the German *Rolandslied* gave it its final form. From the middle of the twelfth century onwards, the legends of the saints gained rapidly in favour as subjects of religious poetry.[1] Two versions—one in Latin, the other in German—have been preserved of the *Vision of Tundalus*, one of the most interesting of these legends: it is the story of an Irish knight whose soul leaves his body for three days and visits heaven and hell.

Legends.

With the growth of the secular spirit, the Spielleute, the real bearers of the popular traditions, became once more a factor in literature. For the first time since the fragmentary *Hildebrandslied*, we meet with the direct literary expression of a Germanic saga in the epic of *König Rother*.[2] The motive

König Rother, ca. 1160.

[1] P. Piper, *Die geistliche Dichtung des Mittelalters*, 2 (D.N.L. 3, 2 [1889]); E. Kraus, *Deutsche Gedichte des 12. Jahrhunderts*, Halle, 1894.

[2] Ed. H. Rückert, Leipzig, 1872, and K. von Bahder, Halle, 1884. Cp. P. Piper, *Die Spielmannsdichtung*, 1 (D.N.L., 2, 1 [1887]), 75 ff.

of *König Rother* was a favourite one with the poets of the latter half of the twelfth century; it reappears in various forms in the literature of this period. The young king Rother, whose court is at Bari in Southern Italy, is recommended by his councillors to wed the daughter of King Constantine of Constantinople, the only princess whom they deem worthy to share his throne. The sons of Duke Berchter of Meran are among the envoys sent to Constantinople to woo the princess. Constantine, however, throws them all into prison. Under the name of Dietrich—itself an echo of the national sagas—Rother sets out accompanied by his faithful Berchter, to free his vassals and win his bride. This Duke Berchter, who, as Berchtung, plays an important part in the epic of *Wolfdietrich*, is, as we shall see, a traditional example of loyalty (*Treue*) in the Germanic saga. Rother obtains an interview with the princess, fits a golden shoe upon her foot, and learns from her own lips that she will wed none but King Rother. She induces her father to set the imprisoned vassals at liberty for the space of three days; they are brought up haggard and starving from the dungeon, to a meal which the princess has prepared for them. Rother, meanwhile, conceals himself behind a curtain and plays upon his harp the "Leich" which he had played to them when they departed upon their mission.

"Swilich ir begunde trinkin,
deme begundiz nidir sinkin,
daz er iz ûffe den tisc gôz.
swilich ir abir sneit daz brôt,
deme intfiel das mezses durch nôt.
sie wurdin von trôste wizzelôs.
wie manich sîn trûren virlôs!
sie sâzin alle unde hôrtin
war daz spil hinnen kârte.
lûde der eine leich klanc:
Lûppolt ober den tisch spranch
unde der grâve Erwîn,
sie heizin in willekume sîn,
den rîchen harfêre
unde kustin en zwâren."[1]

1 "Wer von ihnen (zu) trinken begann, dem begann es nieder (zu) sinken, dass er es (*i.e.*, den Trank) auf den Tisch goss. Wer von ihnen aber das Brot schnitt, dem entfiel das Messer durch Not (*i.e.*, der war durch innere Bewegung überwältigt). Sie wurden von (dem) Troste (den sie empfingen), verstandlos. Wie mancher sein Trauern verlor! Sie sassen alle und hörten, wohin das Spiel weiter ginge. Laut klang der einzige Leich; Luppolt sprang über den Tisch und der Graf Erwin, sie heissen ihn, den vornehmen Harfner, willkommen [sein], und küssten ihn fürwahr" (ll. 2513-2527).

King Rother and his men do Constantine a service by vanquishing a heathen king who invades the country, and upon his departure from Constantinople, Rother carries off the princess in his ship. This is obviously the end of the original story, but the inventive author could not resist the temptation to spin out a sequel, in which Rother's queen is brought back to her parents by a cunning Spielmann, and Rother is obliged to go through a fresh series of adventures to win her again.

The importance of *König Rother* lies in its relations to the national sagas. The name of the hero may perhaps be traced to a Lombardian king Rothari, who lived in the seventh century, and the story is also to be found in a Low German version preserved in the Icelandic *Thidrekssaga*. But *König Rother* is, at the same time, inspired by the Crusades; the hero does not seek his bride in the land of the Huns, as in the older form of the saga, but in the Orient. The influence of the crusade of the Bavarian Duke Welf, in 1101, is not to be mistaken, and many traits in the character of Constantine suggest the Byzantine Emperor Alexius. *König Rother* is an excellent specimen of that spirited, light-hearted form of narrative poetry which is associated with the medieval Spielmann. There is little attempt at finer characterisation in it, but its figures are not without life: they live by virtue of what they do. The whole poem, with its healthy if somewhat rough humour, is clearly composed with a view to catching the ear of a popular audience. The author of *König Rother* seems to have been a Spielmann of the Rhineland, which in literary respects was the most advanced part of Germany in the twelfth century, but the poem itself was written in Bavaria. The year 1160 may be regarded as the approximate date of its composition.

Herzog Ernst, ca. 1180.

Herzog Ernst[1] is an epic of a different class. It is questionable, indeed, if we have here the work of a Spielmann at all. The genial tone and the intimate touch with the popular epic traditions, which the poetry of the Spielleute almost always shows, are absent from *Herzog Ernst*. The author was more probably some lay brother who went farther afield than the Christian legends, which, as we have seen, the clerical poets of the time usually made the subjects of their poetry. *Herzog*

[1] Edited by K. Bartsch, Vienna, 1869. Cp. P. Piper, in D.N.L. 2, 1, 108 ff.

Ernst is a remarkable medley of historical and legendary elements. Ernst II. was a Duke of Swabia who lived a stormy life of constant rebellion against his stepfather, King Konrad II.; finally reduced to freebooting, he met his death in the Black Forest in 1030. The life of this freebooting duke was seized upon by the popular imagination, and he became a kind of Götz von Berlichingen of the eleventh century. Older historical elements were gradually woven into the story, and finally Duke Ernst was associated with a crusade: to put an end to the constant fighting in which he and his followers are involved, they set out for the Holy Land. The second and longer part of the poem describes, somewhat in the manner of the *Alexanderlied*, presently to be discussed, the duke's adventures among men with cranes' heads, among griffins and web-footed people — who, when it rains, have simply to lie on their backs and raise one leg to obtain shelter—among pigmies and giants, not to speak of natural wonders such as a magnetic mountain and an underground river. In fact, this part of the epic is a collection of ideas then current about the East, drawn from all possible sources. Duke Ernst ultimately vanquishes the Saracens, reaches the Holy Sepulchre, and then returns home to be reconciled to his stepfather. *Herzog Ernst* was originally written on the Lower Rhine, and a few fragments of this oldest version have been preserved: it seems, however, at an early date, to have found its way to Bavaria, where it was remodelled and given its present form about 1180. A later version of the poem, also in the Bavarian dialect, as well as a ballad of the fourteenth and a "Volksbuch" of the fifteenth century, bear testimony to its lasting popularity. As literature, *Herzog Ernst* is inferior to *König Rother;* the personal note of the Spielmann, which makes the latter epic so interesting, is missing. On the other hand, although *Herzog Ernst* shows plainly the influence of the Crusades, there is in it none of that higher spirit of chivalry which was just at this time being introduced into German literature from France. It is neither Spielmann's poetry nor Court epic.

With the rise of a "Court" poetry, and the growing interest of the higher ranks of society in literature, the Spielmann found himself at a disadvantage. The consequence was that, as the literary horizon of the nation widened, the class

of epic of which *Rother* is the best example degenerated. The Spielmann's poetry which is to be met with at the close of the twelfth century is essentially popular, appealing in the first instance to the crasser tastes of the multitude. Three poems—*Salman und Morolf*, *Orendel*, and *Oswald*—may be taken as representative of this class of poetry: each of these works treats, under a different guise, a theme similar to that of *König Rother*.

Salman und Morolf.

Salman und Morolf[1] is the typical example of the German Spielmann's epic. The saga itself, which goes back to the Jewish traditions of Solomon's wisdom, is one of the most popular and wide spread in Western literatures; in German literature, it reappears later on, in the form of a ballad, and the wit of Morolf enjoyed great popularity in the age of the Reformation. Solomon or Salman, who is here no longer the Biblical Solomon, but a Christian King of Jerusalem, occupies the position of the King of Constantinople in *Rother*. It is, however, not Salman's daughter, but his wife, who is wooed and carried off by the heathen king, Fore. Salman's brother Morolf—the best literary portrait of the medieval Spielmann that we possess—discovers her, and she is brought back to Jerusalem by a strategy similar to that related in the second part of *Rother*. Once more, as in the older epic, the heroine is stolen, this time by another heathen king, and it again falls to the quick-witted Morolf to effect a rescue.

Orendel and *Oswald.*

While *Herzog Ernst* was probably, as we have seen, an example of what the Spielmann's epic became in the hands of a clerical poet, *Orendel* and *Oswald*[2] are examples of religious legends written by Spielleute. Orendel, in whose name and story there is perhaps a faint echo of a Germanic saga of the sea, is in the present poem a King of Trèves (Trier), while the lady whom he wooes, and for whose sake he undertakes his adventures, is a Queen of Jerusalem. The real centre, however, round which the poem turns, is the Holy Coat: this falls into Orendel's hands, and he brings it back with him to Trèves. In the same way, King Oswald of Northumbria is a figure rather to be associated with legendary poetry than with the light epic of the Spiel-

[1] Ed. F. Vogt, Halle, 1880. Cp. Piper, *l.c.*, 196 ff.

[2] *Orendel*, ed. A. Berger, Bonn, 1888; *Oswald*, ed. L. Ettmüller, Zurich, 1835. Cp. P. Piper, *l.c.*, 146 ff.

mann. The daughter of a fierce Saracen king has in this poem to be won by stealth, and a talking raven plays the part of messenger.

Although the Spielmann thus represented the most energetic and healthy reaction against asceticism which is to be found in this age, he could not, alone and unaided, be a literary force of much positive value; his art was of necessity undisciplined. Indigenous forces were clearly not sufficient to effect the salvation of German literature in the twelfth century. A fresh stimulus had to come from without, and that stimulus was due to chivalry. To the beginnings of the literature of chivalry we must now turn.

CHAPTER II.

THE POETRY OF KNIGHTHOOD; THE BEGINNINGS OF THE MINNESANG.

"THE chief historical problem of the middle ages in Europe," it has been said, "was the reconciliation of the Germanic national spirit with Christianity." The conflict between these two elements explains much of the dualism of the age: so long as they were at war with each other, the barrier that separated Church and World was insurmountable. The solution of the problem which the eleventh and twelfth centuries had to offer was the Knight of the Crusades; in him the spiritual and the temporal were, for a time at least, reconciled. The conception of knighthood or chivalry was of Germanic origin; it was a natural development of the social conditions of the Merovingian and Carlovingian periods. Chivalry, however, first took shape on Latin soil, namely, in Provence, and it developed most rapidly in Northern France. The Crusades brought the "Ritter" or knight to perfection. They gave him that ideal calling for which the early conflicts with the Saracens had paved the way; they raised him from a purely practical existence to a life inspired by higher aims: he became the champion of an unworldly idea. The Crusades revived those old Germanic ideals of loyalty and faithfulness, of manly bearing and respect for womanhood, which, under the routine of an uninspiring life in the Roman atmosphere of Southern Europe, were gradually being obliterated. But, most important of all, they reconciled the ruling classes with the Church, and the rise of the orders of chivalry gave the Christian knight his final stamp.

Influence of the Crusades.

The influence of the Crusades as a factor in the social and intellectual life of Europe can hardly be overestimated. The

ideal interests which they awakened, permeated all classes of society; they raised men above selfish ambitions and united all nations in one great aim; they gave Europe a community not merely of ideas, but also of social customs, such as it had not known since the Roman empire, and was not to know again—and then only in a limited degree—until the century of Lessing and Rousseau. Again, through their contact with the East, the crusaders threw open a new world to the European imagination. The strange peoples and customs, the unfamiliar plants and animals, the rich textures, precious stones, and fabulous wealth of the Orient had a peculiar fascination for the western mind, and a childish delight in these wonders re-echoes through medieval poetry until long after the classical renaissance in Italy.

The Crusades thus introduced a new element into the popular poetry of the age: *König Rother* and *Herzog Ernst* are, as we have just seen, examples of how the western world regarded the newly discovered Orient. And in a still more marked degree, the Orient lent its colouring to the new poetry of knighthood, the beginnings of which have now to be considered. The forms and ceremonies of knighthood, just as the knight himself, had come to Germany from France; it was thus only natural that the new literature should also have been an importation from France. About the middle of the twelfth century were written two poems, both by clerical poets, both translations from the French, which may be regarded as forming the starting-point for the German epic of knighthood. These are the *Alexanderlied* and the *Rolandslied*.

The poetry of knighthood.

As far back as the third century, the saga of Alexander the Great had been made the subject of a Greek romance, and through this romance it became familiar both to the East and to the West. Apart from the purely anecdotal literature which the early crusaders brought back with them, the saga of Alexander was the first channel by which oriental influence found its way into western literature. In Europe its popularity was due to two Latin versions which served the French poet Auberi, or, as his German translator calls him, Alberich, of Bisenzun (probably Briançon), as the basis of a *Chanson d'Alexandre*. Unfortunately, only the opening verses of this French epic have been preserved, and it is impossible to estimate with how much originality Lamprecht, who was a priest

Lamprecht's *Alexanderlied*, ca. 1140.

of the Rhineland, translated it into German. His *Alexanderlied*, which was originally written about 1140, exists, moreover, in three MSS., all of them of a much later date than the original poem, and differing materially from one another.[1]

In *technique* and spirit more akin to the popular epic than to the Court epic, the *Alexanderlied* stands at the parting of the ways. Lamprecht's own poetic ideals were naturally those of the Spielleute, while his French model was an epic of chivalry. The German poet compares one of his hero's combats not merely with those that took place round Troy, but with the battle on the Wülpensand in the saga of *Gudrun;* and Alexander himself is ranged beside Hagen, Wate, Herwig, and Wolfwin. Lamprecht's imagery, too, is that of the popular sagas; his battle-scenes—as, for instance, that between Alexander and Porus — are wild and sanguinary; his heroes wade in blood. His pathos is of that large-hearted kind to be found in early literature. In all this the *Alexanderlied* is primitive, Germanic. But the conception of life in the poem is tempered by chivalry; the hero has not, perhaps, passed through the school of knighthood, but he has at least mingled with knights. There is an almost modern sentiment in the letter which Alexander sends to his mother and Aristotle, telling of his adventures in wonderful lands that reach to the end of the world; how in a dim forest he finds, for example, flower-maidens who are born from the cups of the flowers and die at the approach of winter. In all this there is a gentler light, a more lyric beauty, than we are accustomed to find in the poetry of the early twelfth century, and it is at times difficult to believe that the letter was written by the same poet who described the sanguinary encounters of the earlier part of the poem.

Konrad's *Rolandslied*, ca. 1135.

The second of the two epics which stand at the beginning of the new epoch, the *Rolandslied*,[2] a version of the *Chanson de Roland*, is farther removed from the indigenous "Spielmannsepik" and brings us a step nearer to the new poetry which was to dominate Middle High German literature as the "Court Epic." Konrad, the author of the *Rolandslied*, was also, like Lamprecht, a *pfaffe* or priest. His translation was

[1] Ed. K. Kinzel, Halle, 1884; P. Piper, *Die Spielmannsdichtung*, D.N.L., 2, 2 [1888], 116 ff.

[2] Ed. K. Bartsch, Leipzig, 1874; P. Piper, *Die Spielmannsdichtung*, 2 D.N.L., 2, 2 ([1888]), 14 ff.

undertaken in Regensburg, probably in the early 'thirties, at the command of Heinrich the Proud of Bavaria, who had presumably brought the French manuscript with him from France. Unlike the great Court epics of a later date, the German *Rolandslied* suffers by comparison with its French original. The *Chanson de Roland* is the oldest of the "chansons de geste"; it describes Charles the Great's heroic Spanish campaign, the death of Roland by the treason of his stepfather Genelon, and the terrible Nemesis—comparable to the "Rache" of the *Nibelungenlied*—which overtakes the traitor and his heathen allies. But all this lay beyond the horizon of the narrow-souled Bavarian priest. The magnificent heroism and patriotism of the *Chanson de Roland* have to give place to religious fanaticism; the spirit of the original is national, that of the German *Rolandslied* is purely monastic. Konrad's poetic talents were not much greater than Lamprecht's had been; but his conversion of the French assonances into rhymed couplets at least shows an understanding for the needs of German verse. Besides translating the *Chanson de Roland*, Konrad, it may be noted, had possibly some hand in the production of the *Kaiserchronik*.

Eilhart von Oberge.

However much of the spirit of chivalry there may be in the *Alexanderlied* and the *Rolandslied*, both works still belong essentially to the category of "Spielmannsepik." A more immediate forerunner of the German Court poets is Eilhart von Oberge, born in the neighbourhood of Hildesheim, and probably a vassal of Heinrich the Lion's. Eilhart's *Tristrant*[1] is a German version, not of the French epic by Thomas de Bretagne, which served Gottfried von Strassburg as model, but of an earlier French romance ascribed to a jongleur Berol. Eilhart's native language was naturally Low German, but he wrote his poem in a Middle German dialect, presumably that it might find a wider circle of readers. According to the accepted view, the date of the poem is approximately 1170-73; but it is possible that it was not written until considerably later. *Tristrant* is still rough and crude in workmanship; it has nothing of the polish of the later Court epic; but if we compare it with the earlier Spiel-

Tristrant, ca. 1170-73.

[1] Ed. F. Lichtenstein (*Quellen und Forschungen*, 19), Strassburg, 1877; P. Piper, *Die höfische Epik*, 1 (D.N.L., 4, 1, 1 [1892]), 13 ff. Cp. E. Schröder's paper in the *Zeitschrift f. deutsches Altertum*, 42 (1898), 72 ff.

mann's poetry, we find a different atmosphere. Life is here looked upon from a new standpoint. The passions are no longer simple as in the old epic; love merges into the gallantry of the "Minnedienst." Eilhart takes a pleasure in the phrases of chivalry, and his light, conversational dialogue is foreign to older German narrative poetry.

Floris und Blancheflur, ca. 1170.

Another forerunner of Gottfried's in this age was an unknown poet of the Lower Rhine, who introduced to German readers the favourite love-saga of the middle ages, *Floris und Blancheflur*, a story of two youthful lovers whose passion surmounts all obstacles and ultimately triumphs. The fragments of the poem which have been preserved do not, however, reveal much poetic charm. Still another knightly romance of this period is *Graf Rudolf*, a Thuringian poem descriptive of adventures in the East. The poet of *Graf Rudolf*, which was also undoubtedly based on a French original, endeavours to make up by means of patriotism for what he lacks in literary ability.[1]

Graf Rudolf, ca. 1170.

The "Beast Epic."

From France came also another form of romance, the "Beast Epic." As we have seen, it was not new to Germany, but between the purely anecdotal *Ecbasis captivi* of the tenth century and the connected story of the twelfth there must obviously have been many stages of development. The focus of that development was Lorraine; here the *Ecbasis captivi* was composed, and in Ghent was written the first continuous Beast Romance, namely, the Latin *Ysengrimus* of Nivardus (1150).[2] Poets in Northern France then took up the theme, which had already in the hands of Nivardus become a vehicle for satire, and thus arose the *Roman de Renart* with its many "branches."[3] The first German Beast Romance was founded upon the *Roman de Renart*, and written about 1180 by an Alsatian monk, Heinrich der Glîchesære.[4] Heinrich's poem, of which only some 700 verses have been preserved, is a dry narrative of no great literary charm: it relates how Isengrin the wolf is befooled by Reinhart the fox, and how Reinhart cures the sick lion, into whose ear an ant has crept. The fox compounds a plaster, to which the other animals are

Nivardus's *Ysengrimus*, 1150.

Heinrich der Glîchesære, ca. 1180.

[1] P. Piper, *Die Spielmannsdichtung*, 2 (D.N.L., 2, 2 [1888]), 292 ff.
[2] Ed. E. Voigt, Halle, 1884. Cp. also P. Piper in D.N.L., 2, 1, 237 ff.
[3] Ed. E. Martin. 3 vols., Strassburg, 1881-87.
[4] Ed. J. Grimm, Leipzig, 1840. Cp. D.N.L., 2, 1, 287 ff.

compelled to contribute pieces of their skin; the heat of the plaster drives the ant out of the lion's ear and he regains his hearing. The German poet shows some originality in not allowing the fox's slyness to end without further consequences, as it does in his French original; Reinhart turns traitor to his lord and ultimately poisons him.

Beginnings of the Minnesang.

In all literatures, the lyric is one of the most elemental forms of poetic expression, coeval with, if not still older than, the embryo stage of the epic, but, owing to the fact that it is not so necessary to commit songs to writing as it is in the case of narrative poetry, the lyric does not appear until a comparatively late date in literary history. It is, nevertheless, strange that in a literature like that of Germany, where the lyric is the supreme form of poetic expression, lyric poetry cannot be traced farther back—a few fragments in Old High German times excepted — than the middle of the twelfth century. As early as Charles the Great's time there was mention, it will be remembered, of certain *winileod* or love messages, although none of these *winileod* have been preserved. But now, on the very threshold of the German Minnesang, we find, forming the close of a Latin love-letter from a lady to a monk, half-a-dozen lines of simple charm which might well be analogous to the Carlovingian *winileod.*

"Dû bist mîn, ih bin dîn:
des solt dû gewis sîn.
dû bist beslozzen
in mînem herzen:
verlorn ist daz slüzzelîn: .
dû muost immer drinne sîn." [1]

The *Carmina Burana.*

Again, in the songs of the Goliards or wandering scholars, of which a Bavarian collection, the *Carmina Burana*,[2] so called from the monastery of Benediktbeuern, dates from the twelfth century, there is, besides witty satire and joviality, genuine lyric feeling. This Goliard poetry is in Latin, but the refrains are occasionally in German, and now and then a wholly German verse is to be met with. With these very

[1] "Du bist mein, ich bin dein. Dessen sollst du gewiss sein. Du bist eingeschlossen in meinem Herzen; verloren ist das Schlüsselein; du musst immer darinnen sein" (*Des Minnesangs Frühling*, herausg. von K. Lachmann und M. Haupt, 4th ed., Leipzig, 1888, 3); in D.N.L. the Minnesang is edited by F. Pfaff, 2 vols., 8, 1 and 2 [1892-95].

[2] Ed. J. A. Schmeller, 2nd ed., Breslau, 1883.

scanty beginnings, to which might be added the older clerical poetry in honour of the Virgin, the first or most nearly primitive stage in the development of the German lyric is exhausted. From the middle of the twelfth century onwards a new element, that of chivalry, made its appearance in the lyric; and in the train of chivalry came the literary influence and example of Provence. The cultivation of the lyric now passed over into the hands of the "Minnesingers," an aristocratic class belonging mainly to the ranks of the lower nobility.

Provençal influence.

The fact that the beginnings of this poetry are found in Austria might imply that it sprang up in comparative freedom from foreign influences, but it is more likely that the German Minnesang was from the first influenced by the Provençal lyric. Austria undoubtedly came into touch with the south of France by way of Italy at an early date. At the same time, no form of Middle High German literature, not even the national "Volksepos," retained, as we shall see, its Germanic characteristics so completely as the Minnesang.[1]

Kürenberg.

One of the oldest of the German Minnesingers was an Austrian nobleman, a Herr von Kürenberg, under whose name a number of strophes have been preserved, similar to those which are familiar to us from the *Nibelungenlied*.[2] In simple terse phrases, often in the direct narrative form of the epic, the "Kürenberger" calls up lyric scenes and situations of a certain pristine beauty. A lady stands upon her tower and sighs for her lover; she compares him, like Kriemhild in the *Nibelungenlied*, to a falcon which flies away to a foreign land; the falcon returns with the silk threads still upon his talons and the golden ornaments on his plumage, and the poem closes with the line—

"got sende si zesamene, die gerne geliebe wellen sîn."[3]

Dietmar von Aist.

The poetry of another Austrian singer, Dietmar von Aist,[4] shows the primitive Minnesang in the process of develop-

[1] Cp. W. Wilmanns, *Leben und Dichten Walthers von der Vogelweide*, Bonn, 1882, 16 ff.; A. E. Schönbach, *Die Anfänge des deutschen Minnesangs*, Graz, 1898, and also papers by K. Burdach and R. M. Meyer in the *Zeitschrift f. deutsches Altertum*, 27 (1883), 343 ff., 29 (1885), 121 ff., 34 (1890), 146 ff.

[2] *Minnesangs Frühling*, 7 ff.; D.N.L., 8, 1, 6 ff. Cp. E. Joseph, *Die Frühzeit des deutschen Minnesangs* (*Quellen und Forschungen*, 79), Strassburg, 1896.

[3] "Gott sende sie zusammen, die gern in Liebe vereint sein möchten."

[4] *Minnesangs Frühling*, 32 ff.; D.N.L., *l.c.*, 1 ff.

ment. Many of Dietmar's verses are still on the naïve level of the Kürenberger's; others, again, suggest the conventional Minnesang of a later date. Dietmar knows no keener delight than in the passing of winter and the return of the birds and flowers; here, as in the Kürenberger's poetry, a lady expresses yearning for her absent lover, the latter appearing once more under the guise of a falcon. One poem preserved under Dietmar's name is especially noteworthy as being the oldest example in the German Minnesang of the "Tagelied," the Provençal "alba." The parting of two lovers at daybreak was one of the favourite themes of the early Romance lyric, but so simple are Dietmar's lines that it is hard to believe he was obliged to go to Provençal models for the thought underlying them. A bird on the linden awakens the lovers; the knight must go—

"Diu frouwe begunde weinen.
'du rîtest hinne und lâst mich einen.
wenne wilt du wider her?
owê, du füerest mîne fröide dar.'"[1]

The Burggraf von Regensburg and Meinloh von Sevelingen.

To this early period of the Minnesang belong also two Bavarian singers, the Burggraf von Regensburg and Meinloh von Sevelingen.[2] The few strophes by these poets which have been preserved are written in the half-ballad style of the Kürenberger and Dietmar von Aist. Occasionally, however, Meinloh's verses show the influence of the Minnedienst of a later age.

"Spruchdichtung."

Not only the beginnings of the Minnesang, but also those of a closely allied form of poetry, the "Spruch," may be traced back to the last quarter of the twelfth century. The Spruch in its oldest form was a one-strophe poem of a satiric or didactic nature, and in German literature, at least, belongs to the more primitive literary forms. In the oldest collections of the Minnesang are preserved a number of such Sprüche by a Spielmann called Herger; other Sprüche, again, mention as their author "Der Spervogel";[3] in any case, the older poetry of this class lay exclusively in the hands of the Spielleute. Characteristic of these verses is the pessimism

Herger and the Spervogel.

[1] "Die Frau begann zu weinen. 'Du reitest hin und lässt mich allein. Wann willst du wieder her (*i.e.*, wiederkehren)? O weh, du führst meine Freude fort (mit dir).'"
[2] *Minnesangs Frühling*, 11 ff.; D.N.L., *l.c.*, 10 ff.
[3] *Minnesangs Frühling*, 20 ff. Cp. D.N.L., 2, 1, 315 ff.

that pervades them; the singer is fond of looking back regretfully upon his own past, and seeing how much might have been otherwise: there is pessimism, too, in the tone in which he sings the praises and virtues of domestic life. These strophes form the beginning of a class of poetry which accompanies the Minnesang throughout its *Blütezeit*. As knighthood decayed and the middle class rose in importance, the Spruchdichtung made corresponding advances in popular favour, until in the period of the Reformation it became one of the most characteristic forms of literary expression, and a favourite weapon of offence and defence.

CHAPTER III.

THE *NIBELUNGENLIED.*

THE traditional ballad poetry of the German people, the materials out of which their national epic was to be formed, had, as we have seen, been kept alive through the dark centuries by wandering Spielleute. With the awakening of more ideal interests under the influence of the Crusades in the twelfth century, the popular epic entered, however, upon a new phase of development. The position of the Spielmann was improved; his work became more literary in character, an advance which is to be noticed in romances like *König Rother* and *Herzog Ernst*. Thus the literature associated with the Spielmann in the Middle High German period falls into two groups. On the one hand, we have the typical epic of the Spielmann, such as the poems already considered in the first chapter of the present part—poems essentially popular in tone, and depending for their interest on rough anecdote, comic incident, and adventure; on the other hand, national epics like the *Nibelungenlied*, *Gudrun*, and the best poems of the *Heldenbuch*. Under the influence of the serious literary tastes of the aristocratic classes, the traditions of Siegfried, of Attila and the Nibelungs, of Dietrich and Ermanarich, were welded into epics of primeval grandeur.

Development of the Spielmann's poetry.

We have already seen how the mythological saga of Siegfried and the Nibelungs had, in the age subsequent to the Migrations, been grafted upon the events which culminated in the annihilation of the Burgundians by the Huns. Siegfried is the son of a Frankish king, Brünhild a Princess of Iceland, while Hagen the Nibelung has become a kinsman of the Burgundian king Gunther. For a time these epic traditions were only preserved in Saxon lands; then they seem to have

The *Nibelungen* saga.

passed over to Austria. In Austria, several new personages were added to the saga, such as Dietrich of Bern (Theodorich of Verona)—who was not, of course, a contemporary of Attila—and Markgraf Rüdeger. At a still later date, Bishop Pilgrim of Passau—the same bishop who is said to have made a Latin version of the *Nibelungen* saga at the beginning of the tenth century—was introduced as an uncle of Kriemhild.

Theory of ballad origin.

In 1816, Karl Lachmann published his investigations on the *Nibelungenlied*, in which he applied to the German epic the theory of ballad-origin which Wolf, twenty years earlier, had applied to the Homeric epics. Lachmann distinguished, as the original components of the *Nibelungenlied*, twenty ballads which, according to his view, had been composed about 1190, while the epic itself had taken its present form about 1210. The comparative study of the epic since Lachmann's time has not weakened his theory, but it has shown that the development from ballad to epic is by no means so simple or so rapid as he supposed. The *Nibelungenlied* had undoubtedly passed through a long evolution before it crystallised into the earliest form in which it has been preserved, and Lachmann's attempt to discover separable lays or ballads in the existing Middle High German poem has thus small positive value. Of the three principal manuscripts of the poem [1]—each of which in turn has been regarded as most nearly approaching the original form—none is as old as the beginning of the thirteenth century. Whatever may have been the earlier history of the *Nibelungenlied*, it is tolerably certain that in its latest stage the epic was written in Austria about 1200 or a little earlier. The poet of the *Nibelungenlied*—that is to say, the poet who gave the epic its final form—may possibly have been of noble birth, but it is more likely that he was only a Spielmann,[2] schooled in the higher Court poetry and acquainted with courtly life; he was, above all, familiar

[1] *A* in Munich, the shortest MS., edited by K. Lachmann, 5th ed., Berlin, 1878; *B* in St Gall, edited by K. Bartsch, 6th ed., Leipzig, 1886; *C* in Donaueschingen, which approximates most nearly to the Court epic, edited by E. Zarncke, 6th ed., Leipzig, 1887. *A* and *B* are entitled *Der Nibelunge Nôt; C*, *Der Nibelunge Liet.* Cp. also the edition in D.N.L., by P. Piper, 6, 2 and 3 [1890-91]. Of the many modern translations, that by K. Simrock (1827; 52nd ed., Stuttgart, 1894) enjoys the widest popularity. R. von Muth, *Einleitung in das Nibelungenlied*, Paderborn, 1877; H. Lichtenberger, *Le Poème et la Légende des Nibelungen*, Paris, 1891.

[2] Cp., however, E. Kettner, *Die österreichische Nibelungendichtung*, Berlin, 1897, 199 ff.

with the revival of lyric poetry, which, as we have seen, began on Austrian soil in the last decades of the twelfth century.

" Uns ist in alten mæren wunders vil geseit
von heleden lobebæren, von grôzer arebeit,
von fröuden, hôchgezîten, von weinen und von klagen,
von küener recken strîten, muget ir nu wunder hœren sagen.

Ez wuohs in Burgonden ein vil edel magedîn,
daz in allen landen niht schœners mohte sîn,
Kriemhilt geheizen: si wart ein scœne wîp,
dar umbe muosen degene vil verliesen den lîp."[1]

In these opening strophes of *Der Nibelunge Nôt*, the reader is at once introduced to the central figure of the whole epic, the Burgundian princess Kriemhild, who lives at Worms, under the protection of her mother Ute and her three brothers, Gunther, Gernot, and the youthful Giselher. In the service of these Burgundian kings are faithful vassals — Hagen of Troneg, Dankwart, Ortwin, Volker, and many others. At the beginning of the poem, Kriemhild has a dream in which a wild falcon, which she had reared, is torn by two eagles before her eyes. The falcon, her mother tells her, is a noble husband. But Kriemhild will hear nothing of marriage: she knows too well Kriemhild.

" wie liebe mit leide ze jungest lônen kan."[2]

In this line is concentrated the whole tragedy of the epic.

In his second "Aventiure" the poet turns aside to tell of Sîfrit or Siegfried. The mythological background of the Siegfried saga has grown dim, giving place to a more definite historical setting. Of the young hero's youth in the forest, of his bringing up by the smith, we hear nothing; of Siegfried.

[1] "Uns ist in alten Mären (Sagen) viel Wundersames gesagt, von lobenswerten Helden, von grosser Not, von Freuden, Festlichkeiten, von Weinen und von Klagen; von kühner Helden Streiten könnt ihr nun Wunderbares sagen hören. Es wuchs in Burgunden eine sehr edle Jungfrau, dass in allen Ländern nichts Schöneres mochte sein, Kriemhild (war sie) geheissen; sie wurde ein schönes Weib. Um derentwillen mussten viele Helden das Leben verlieren" (i, 1, 2; Text *B*). The *Nibelungen* epic is composed, not in the rhymed couplets of the great mass of Middle High German narrative poetry, but in strophes of four lines—a metrical form which first appears in the lyrics of the Kürenberger. A cæsura divides each line into two, and in each half line there are three accented or stress syllables, except in the fourth line, where the second half contains four.

[2] "Wie Freude mit Leid zuletzt lohnen kann" (i, 17, 3). Cp. xxxix, 2378, 4 (below, p. 69).

his fight with the dragon and the winning of the hoard, little. Siegfried is the son of a king of the Netherlands, a knight of the twelfth century. He has heard of the beauty of Kriemhild, and sets out for Worms accompanied by eleven vassals. He arrives at King Gunther's Court as a stranger; Hagen alone guesses that he can be no other than Siegfried who slew the dragon and bathed himself invulnerable in its blood. Kriemhild sees Siegfried from her window, and the love she would fain avoid takes possession of her heart. Meanwhile a war between the Burgundians and the Kings of Sachsenland and Denmark gives Siegfried an opportunity to do knightly service for his hosts. His victory is celebrated by a festival which lasts twelve days; the captive kings are set free, and Siegfried sees Kriemhild for the first time. Kriemhild's beauty is described by the poet in the lyric tones of the early German Minnesang; and here it may be noted that the lyric element in the *Nibelungenlied* is still naïvely Germanic; it is but little influenced by the more formal qualities of the Romance lyric. The poet, for instance, compares his heroine coming from the "kemenate" or women's apartments of the castle, with the dawn:—

Siegfried's meeting with Kriemhild.

> "Nu gie diu minneclîche alsô der morgenrôt
> tuot ûz den trüeben wolken. dâ sciet von maneger nôt
> der si dâ truog in herzen und lange het getân:
> er sach die minneclîchen nu vil hêrlîchen stân."

And again with the moon:—

> "Sam der liehte mâne vor den sternen stât,
> des scîn sô lûterlîche ab den wolken gât."[1]

The actual meeting of Siegfried and Kriemhild is described with a simplicity and truth which the phrases of chivalry are not able to conceal:—

> "Dô si den hôhgemuoten vor ir stênde sach,
> do erzunde sich sîn verwe. diu scœne magt sprach:
> 'sît willekomen, her Sîvrit, ein edel ritter guot.'
> dô wart im von dem gruoze vil wol gehœhet der muot.

---

[1] "Nun ging die Liebliche, wie das Morgenrot aus den trüben Wolken thut (*i.e.*, geht). Da schied (*i.e.*, wurde frei) von mancher Not der, der sie im Herzen [da] trug und (es) lange gethan hatte; er sah die Liebliche nun sehr herrlich stehen. . . . Gleichwie der lichte Mond vor den Sternen steht, dessen Schein so hell von den Wolken herab geht" (v, 281; 283, 1, 2).

Er neig ir flîzeclîche : bi der hende si in vie.
wie rehte minneclîche er bî der frouwen gie !
mit lieben ougen blicken ein ander sâhen an
der herre und ouch diu frouwe : daz wart vil tougenlîch getân."[1]

In silence they enter the minster together, and when mass is over Kriemhild thanks Siegfried for the services he has done her brother. "Daz ist," returns Siegfried, "nâch iuwern hulden, mîn frou Kriemhilt, getân."[2] The festival comes to an end and the guests prepare to depart ; Siegfried, however, is persuaded by Giselher to remain in Worms.

Brünhild.

In the sixth "Aventiure" the mythical Siegfried saga is once more brought into the foreground. A report has reached the Rhine of a beautiful princess, Prünhilt or Brünhild by name, who lives in the sea-girt castle of Isenstein in Iceland. The poet of the *Nibelungenlied* has done his best to humanise the superhuman Valkyrie of the old saga ; but the German Brünhild is still endowed with supernatural strength. He who will win her as his bride must first prove his superiority to her in three feats : in throwing the *gêr* or spear, in hurling the stone, and in leaping ; and who fails must, as in all similar sagas, lose his head. Gunther has set his heart upon this princess, and promises his sister to Siegfried if the latter will help him to woo her. With a few chosen vassals, amidst the tears of the women, they set out for Isenstein, sailing down the Rhine. Siegfried stands at the helm, while Gunther himself takes an oar. They reach the open sea, and after twelve days come within sight of Brünhild's castle. With the aid of the "Tarnkappe," a mantle which he had wrested from the dwarf Alberich, Siegfried stands invisible at Gunther's side and assists him to defeat Brünhild in all three tests of strength ; whereupon she commands her men to show their allegiance to Gunther. Meanwhile, however—in an "Aventiure" which is obviously a late addition to the poem—the Burgundians are afraid of betrayal ; as a precaution, Siegfried returns to his kingdom,

[1] "Da sie den Hochherzigen vor sich stehen sah, [da] entbrannte seine Farbe. Die schöne Maid sprach : 'Seid wilikommen, Herr Sivrit, [ein] edler Ritter gut.' Da wurde ihm infolge des Grusses der Mut hoch gehoben. Er verneigte sich vor ihr mit Aufmerksamkeit ; sie nahm ihn bei der Hand. Wie recht lieblich er bei der Jungfrau ging ! Mit freundlichen [Augen-] Blicken sahen einander an der (edle) Herr und auch die Jungfrau : das wurde sehr heimlich gethan" (v, 292, 293).

[2] "Das ist um eure Huld zu erwerben, meine Frau Kriemhild, gethan" (v, 304, 4).

—where, not being recognised, he is obliged to force an entrance —and brings back with him a thousand chosen vassals.

The double wedding.

Siegfried then returns to Worms to announce the coming of Gunther and his bride; Kriemhild and her maidens make preparations for their reception. The double wedding is celebrated at Gunther's Court; Brünhild becomes Gunther's wife, Kriemhild Siegfried's. But Brünhild is secretly envious of Kriemhild's husband; her eyes fill with tears. She weeps, she says, to see her husband's sister married to a bondsman (*eigenholt*), for, when Brünhild was won at Isenstein, Siegfried had given himself out as Gunther's vassal. Gunther promises to tell her at some other time why he has given his sister to Siegfried. Brünhild is not, however, so easily satisfied, and on the night of the wedding, when Siegfried is not at hand to help him, she ties her husband with her girdle and hangs him on a nail in the wall. On the following night, Siegfried in the "Tarnkappe" once more takes Gunther's part; he overpowers Brünhild after a long struggle and leaves her to her husband, not, however, before taking from her as trophies her ring and girdle, which he gives to Kriemhild. Siegfried then returns with his wife to the Netherlands, where, amidst great ceremony, his father makes him king.

Brünhild and Kriemhild's quarrel.

Once more, after the lapse of ten years, Siegfried and Kriemhild return to Worms; Gunther, at Brünhild's suggestion, has invited them to be present at a festival. They accept the invitation, unsuspecting the tragic fate that awaits them. One afternoon before vespers, as the two queens are sitting side by side, watching the knights tourneying in the court, Kriemhild is moved by the sight of her husband, and cannot resist expressing her admiration of him to Brünhild:—

"ich hân einen man,
daz elliu disiu rîche zuo sînen handen solden stân."

To which Brünhild retorts darkly:—

"wie kunde daz gesîn?
obe niemen lebete wan sîn unde dîn,
sô möhten im diu rîche wol wesen undertân;
die wîle lebet Gunther, sô kunde'z nimmer ergân."[1]

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1 "Ich habe einen (solchen) Mann, dass alle diese Länder in seiner Macht stehen sollten" (xiv, 815, 3, 4). "Wie könnte das sein? Wenn niemand lebte ausser ihm und dir, so könnten ihm die Länder wohl unterthan sein: so lange Gunther lebt, [so] könnte es nimmer geschehen" (xiv, 816)

Kriemhild, still musing as she watches Siegfried, compares him to the moon among the stars. Brünhild again insists upon Gunther's superiority. The gentler Kriemhild, anxious to avoid strife, begs Brünhild only to believe that the two kings are peers. Hereupon Brünhild assumes a more friendly tone, but insidiously reminds Kriemhild that when Gunther came to woo her, Siegfried was his vassal. Kriemhild's indignation is roused at being thus branded as a bondsman's wife, and later, when the two queens meet before the minster, and Brünhild commands her to stand with the words—

"jâ sol vor küniges wîbe nimmer eigendiu gegân,"

she throws in blind rage the accusation at her sister-in-law—

"Kundestu noch geswîgen, daz wære dir guot.
du hâst gescendet selbe den dînen schœnen lîp:
wie möhte mannes kebse immer werden küniges wîp?"[1]

"It was Siegfried, not Gunther, who made thee his wife ten years ago." Brünhild bursts into tears, and when the evening service in the minster is over, she asks Kriemhild for proofs of her statement. Kriemhild brings out the ring; a ring might have been stolen from her, but when Brünhild sees the girdle, she weeps bitterly. She now turns to her husband, who summons Siegfried. The latter at first treats the matter lightly as a woman's quarrel, but, being pressed, he takes his oath that his wife's accusation is not true. Shame, however, still rankles in Brünhild's heart, and she has a ready ear for the counsels of Hagen, who has resolved, in grim and unscrupulous loyalty to his king, that Siegfried must die. Even Gunther himself is won over by Hagen to regard the incident as a personal insult, and to give his consent to Siegfried's murder.

Hagen's plot.

By a ruse of Hagen's, messengers arrive in Worms pretending to bring a declaration of war from the two Saxon kings whom Siegfried had already defeated. This gives Siegfried the opportunity of once more offering his services to Gunther, and Kriemhild intrusts him blindly to Hagen's care. She

[1] "Wahrlich, (es) soll vor (des) Königs Weib nimmer (eine) Leibeigene gehen" (xiv, 838, 4). "Könntest du noch schweigen, wäre es gut für dich. Du hast selbst Schande über deinen schönen Leib gebracht; wie könnte je (eines Dienst-)Mannes Kebsweib (eines) Königs Weib werden?" (xiv, 839, 2-4).

sews a cross upon his coat between the shoulders, above the spot where the leaf fell when he bathed in the dragon's blood, the only part of his body that is vulnerable. As soon as Hagen has obtained this information, the pretext of war is no longer necessary; other messengers arrive contradicting the declaration, and a hunt is proposed instead. The description of the chase in the Waskenwald (the forests of the Vosges),[1] with Siegfried's capture of the bear, is one of the best parts of the whole epic. Midday arrives and the hunters pause for refreshment, but the wine has not arrived. Hagen, however, knows a spring in the neighbourhood, and offers, by way of jest, to run a race to it with Gunther and Siegfried. The latter is there long before the others, but he will not drink before King Gunther. When Siegfried's turn comes and he bends down to the spring, Hagen plunges the hero's own spear into his back. Siegfried springs up, but he has no arms within reach except his shield; with it he strikes at Hagen, who flees from him as he had never before fled from any man.

The chase in the Waskenwald.

Siegfried's death.

"Die bluomen allenthalben von bluote wâren naz.
dô rang er mit dem tôde: unlange tet er daz,
want des tôdes wâfen ie ze sêre sneit.
dô mohte reden niht mêre der recke küen' unt gemeit."[2]

When night falls the body is carried home, and at Hagen's command laid before Kriemhild's door. Next morning, when the minster bell rings to early mass, she wakens her women; her chamberlain brings a light and finds the body. Kriemhild at once has a presentiment that it is her husband; she falls to the ground with a cry:—

"Dô rief vil trûreclîche diu küneginne milt:
'Owê mir mînes leides! nu ist dir dîn schilt
mit swerten niht verhouwen: du lîst ermorderôt.
unt wesse ich wer iz het getân, ich riete im immer sînen tôt.'"[3]

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[1] According to the Donaueschingen MS. (*C*), the chase took place in the Odenwald, a change obviously suggested by the fact that the poet makes the hunters cross the Rhine.

[2] "Die Blumen allenthalben von Blute waren nass. Da rang er mit dem Tode; nicht lange that er das, weil des Todes Waffe immer allzusehr schnitt. Da konnte nicht mehr reden der Recke kühn und froh" (xvi, 998).

[3] "Da rief sehr traurig die Königin liebreich: 'O weh mir (wegen) meines Leides! Es ist dir doch dein Schild mit Schwertern nicht verhauen; du liegst ermordet. Und wenn ich wüsste, wer es gethan hat, würde ich immer auf seinen Tod sinnen'" (xvii, 1012, 2-4).

When the body is laid out in its coffin of gold and silver in the minster, the wound bleeds at Hagen's approach, thus pointing to him as the murderer. The first part of the epic virtually closes with Siegfried's death. His father, Siegmund, returns to the Netherlands, but Kriemhild remains in Worms. A further "Aventiure" relates how Kriemhild is reconciled to Gunther, and how she causes the Nibelungs' hoard to be brought to Burgundy. Hagen, however, afraid of the consequences of her generosity, sinks the treasure—and here we meet again with one of the oldest elements of the saga—in the Rhine.

Kriemhild and Etzel.

Thirteen years after Siegfried's death, King Etzel (Attila) of Hunnenland, whose wife, Helche, is dead, sends Markgraf Rüdeger von Bechlaren (Pöchlarn) to Worms, to sue for Kriemhild's hand in marriage. At first Kriemhild will hear nothing of Etzel's suit. When, however, Rüdeger promises her amends for every wrong that has ever been done to her, she consents, for she sees in this marriage a means of avenging Siegfried's death. Kriemhild journeys to Vienna, where her wedding is celebrated with great pomp. For thirteen years she lives happily with Etzel, in the seventh year of her marriage bearing him a son, Ortlieb, but all this time the thought of vengeance has never left her. At last the time seems ripe to her. One night she begs her husband to invite her kinsfolk to a festival. Two Spielleute act as messengers, and have a special injunction to see that Hagen does not remain behind. The latter, wise and foreseeing as ever, guesses Kriemhild's intentions; he counsels the Burgundians not to accept the invitation. They, however, taunt him with cowardice, and he consents to accompany them. On the journey, Hagen learns from two water-nixes, whom he surprises bathing in the Danube, that none of the Burgundians, with the exception of the chaplain, will ever see his home again. To nullify at least part of this prophecy, Hagen throws the chaplain into the river as they are being ferried over; but God's hand is stronger than Hagen's will, and the chaplain reaches the shore in safety. Thus the Burgundians, or, as the poet now prefers to call them, the Nibelungs, journey on, welcomed and entertained on the way by Rüdeger, warned by Dietrich von Bern, who rides out to meet them, until at last they reach Etzel's Court.

The journey of the Burgundians to Etzel's Court

Etzel has made most hospitable preparations, and Kriemhild receives them, but only for her youngest brother Giselher has she a kiss. She makes no secret of her hatred of Hagen, and asks him defiantly why he has not brought with him her treasure:—

> "'Ich bringe iu den tiuvel,' sprach aber Hagene.
> 'ich hân an mînem schilde sô vil ze tragene
> und an mîner brünne: mîn helm der ist lieht,
> daz swert an mîner hand, des enbringe ich iu nieht.'"[1]

Kriemhild invites her guests to disarm, but Hagen refuses. The clouds which hang over this part of the *Nibelungenlied* now begin to lower; the conflict between Hagen and Kriemhild increases rapidly in tragic intensity. Hagen even admits defiantly to her that he was the murderer of Siegfried, and that it is Siegfried's sword which he wears at his side. Night comes down, and the Nibelungs retire to rest in a hall that has been prepared for them. Hagen and the Spielmann, Volker von Alzei, who, upon his fiddle, has played his comrades to sleep, keep watch at the door of the hall. The Huns steal upon their sleeping guests with intent to murder them, but when they see Hagen's helmet shining in the night, they withdraw. Next day the guests go to church, and afterwards a tournament takes place at which Volker kills a noble Hun. Etzel, who knows nothing of Kriemhild's dark purposes, forbids the kinsfolk of the Hun to take blood-revenge. Kriemhild begs Dietrich von Bern to help her to carry out her plot, but he refuses; she then turns to Etzel's brother, Blœdelin, who proves more pliable to her wishes. With a thousand men, Blœdelin treacherously attacks Dankwart and his followers, but, after great losses, Blœdelin is slain, and Dankwart makes his way to the hall where the kings are eating. When Hagen hears of the treachery, he strikes off the head of Kriemhild's son. The fight now becomes general, but through Dietrich's intercession, Etzel, Kriemhild, and he, accompanied by six hundred men, are allowed to leave the hall; all the other Huns are slain, and the Nibelungs remain in possession.

Kriemhild's revenge.

[1] "'Ich bringe euch den Teufel (*i.e.*, so gut wie nichts), erwiederte Hagen. 'Ich habe an meinem Schilde so viel zu tragen und an meinem Brustharnisch; mein Helm, der ist blank, das Schwert in meiner Hand, das bringe ich euch nicht'" (xxviii, 1744).

Night has again fallen, and the Nibelungs are still masters of the hall; but a more fearful fate awaits them. Kriemhild commands the building to be set on fire; the heroes stand ranged along the wall for protection from the flames, and drink the blood of the slain to quench their thirst. In the morning the fight begins anew. Amidst the lamentations of the Huns, Rüdeger falls, and Dietrich is at last roused from his inactivity. He sends his vassal Hildebrand, who succeeds in slaying Volker, although he loses all his men, and must himself flee from Hagen. Only Gunther and Hagen are left of the ill-fated Nibelungs. Dietrich now comes forward himself; he fights first with Hagen and then with Gunther, both of whom he overcomes and makes prisoners. Once more Kriemhild confronts Hagen and demands from him her treasure; but he refuses to give it up as long as any of his masters live. Whereupon Kriemhild orders her brother to be beheaded, and the head brought to Hagen.

"Alsô der ungemuote sîns herren houbet sach,
wider Kriemhilde dô der recke sprach:
'du hâst iz nâch dîm' willen z'einem ende brâht,
und ist ouch rehte ergangen als ich mir hête gedâht.

Nu ist von Burgonden der edel künec tôt,
Gîselher der junge, und ouch her Gêrnôt.
den scaz den weiz nu niemen wan got unde mîn:
der sol dich, vâlandinne, immer wol verholen sîn.'"[1]

Kriemhild draws Siegfried's sword from its sheath and strikes off Hagen's head with her own hand. Dietrich's vassal Hildebrand, who is standing by, cannot see the brave Hagen die so shameful a death unavenged, and slays the queen. And so the lurid tragedy closes:—

"Diu vil michel êre was dâ gelegen tôt.
die liute heten alle jâmer unde nôt.
mit leide was verendet des küniges hôhgezît.
als ie diu liebe leide z'aller jungeste gît.

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1 "Als der Traurige seines Herren Haupt sah, da sprach der Recke zu Kriemhild: 'Du hast es nach deinem Willen zu [einem] Ende gebracht, und es ist auch ganz so gekommen, wie ich mir gedacht hatte. Nun ist von Burgunden der edle König tot, Gîselher der junge, und auch der Herr Gêrnôt. Den Schatz (*i.e.*, den Ort wo der Schatz liegt), den weiss nun niemand ausser Gott und mir; der soll dir, Teufelin, immer wohl verborgen sein'" (xxxix, 2370, 2371).

I'ne kan iu niht bescheiden, waz sider dâ geschach :
wan ritter unde vrouwen weinen man dâ sach,
dar zuo die edeln knehte, ir lieben friunde tôt.
hie hât daz mære ein ende : daz ist der Nibelunge nôt."[1]

The *Nibelungenlied* as a national epic.

The *Nibelungenlied* has often been called the *Iliad* of the Germanic races, and the comparison, although only a general one, is suggestive. The *Nibelungenlied* might be said to represent at once an earlier and a later stage of epic development than the Homeric epic. In the great essentials of story and motive, it is certainly cruder and more primitive. Feelings and passions are simple and fundamental; Siegfried and Hagen, Brünhild and Kriemhild, have none of the subtler attributes of Homer's characters; they have nothing of the evenly balanced intellectuality of the Greeks. Their vices, and even their virtues, are so unveiled as to be almost repellent; their motives are always naïvely transparent. In all the finer qualities, too, of literary art, in beauty of language, wealth of poetic imagery, in balance and proportion, the *Nibelungenlied* belongs to a comparatively less advanced stage of epic poetry than the *Iliad*. But, from another point of view, its development has proceeded farther than that of the Greek epic. As it stands, the German poem is both a Christian epic and an epic of chivalry, while the events it describes belong to an age alike ignorant of chivalry and Christianity. And, although these later elements in the German epic are only loosely attached to it, they cannot be regarded as unessential accessories.[2] In the *Iliad*, on the other hand, there is no trace of such a break in the continuity of tradition; Homer stands—as far, at least, as modern criticism can judge—in a much more intimate relation with his subject than does the poet of the *Nibelungenlied*.

The *Nibelungenlied* is the representative national epic of the Germans; it is national in the sense that it mirrors not the ideas of a single poet, but of a whole race. Its theme was a common possession of that race; its ideals of loyalty,

[1] "Die sehr grosse Herrlichkeit lag da tot. Das ganze Volk hatte Jammer und Not. Mit Trauer war geendet des Königs hohes Fest, wie (denn) die Freude immer zu allerletzt Trauer gibt. Ich kann euch nicht berichten, was nachher geschah; nur (weiss ich, dass) man Ritter und Frauen weinen sah, dazu die edlen Knappen, (um) ihre lieben Verwandten tot (*i.e.*, als Tote). Hier hat die Märe ein Ende; das ist der Nibelungen Not" (xxxix, 2378, 2379).

[2] Cp. R. von Muth, *l.c.*, 344 ff., and A. E. Schönbach, *Das Christentum in der altdeutschen Heldendichtung*, Graz, 1897, 3 ff.

of nobility, of kingly virtue, its scorn of treason and deceit, and its firm faith in the implacableness of rightful vengeance, —all this is flesh and blood of the Germanic peoples. The *Nibelungenlied* is, in such respects, primitive, but it is not barbaric; nor is it, as we have seen, without pathos and lyric beauty. Scenes such as that where Giselher wooes Rüdeger's daughter at Bechlaren, or where Volker fiddles his comrades to sleep, while Hagen, leaning on his shield, keeps watch by the door of the hall, are full of a beauty which is unsurpassed in any later epic. Occasionally, too, the sombreness of the tragedy is relieved by that grim irony which is rarely wanting in primitive literature, and which has, perhaps, never found finer expression than in the passage where the poet likens Volker's sword to a fiddle-bow playing upon the steel of the Huns' helmets. And, like all great national epics, the *Nibelungenlied* is built up upon a simple and fundamental idea, of which the poet never loses sight. This idea, the mysterious retribution which follows on the heels of all earthly happiness, sounds like a deep organ note through the *Nibelungenlied* from its opening words to its close. Neither in *Iliad* nor *Odyssey*—nowhere, indeed, in the epic poetry of any people—has the tragic movement of events been depicted upon such a sublime scale as in the second part of the *Nibelungen Not*.

Its pathos and humour.

In the principal MSS. of the *Nibelungenlied* the epic is followed by a shorter poem, *Diu Klage*,[1] in which the popular craving for a continuation is satisfied. The *Klage* relates how the survivors at Etzel's court, at Bechlaren and at Worms, mourned for the fallen heroes. This continuation, which is not written in the *Nibelungen* strophe, but in rhymed couplets, is, however, much inferior to the epic itself; the heathen spirit of the *Nibelungenlied* is, under the influence of the Court epic, tempered by Christian sympathy; the grim silence of the heroic world is disturbed by psychological explanations and sentimental regrets.

Diu Klage.

[1] Ed. by K. Lachmann (with the *Nibelungen Not*), also by K. Bartsch, Leipzig, 1875, and A. Edzardi, Hamburg, 1875. Cp. P. Piper. *Die Nibelungen* 1 (D.N.L., 6, 2 [1890]). 187 ff.

CHAPTER IV.

GUDRUN AND THE *HELDENBUCH*.

BESIDES the *Nibelungenlied*, there is only one other "Volks-epos" or epic based on a national saga which calls for a detailed description—namely, the lay of *Gudrun*.[1] In the form in which *Gudrun*—or *Kudrun*, as the South Germans called it—has been handed down to us, it, too, is an Austrian epic, but the story belonged originally to that Northern cycle of sagas to which the Anglo-Saxon *Beowulf* is related. On the shores of the Northern seas, the myth of the conflict of light and darkness, of storm and sunshine, took a peculiar form: here, the hero, the sun-god, had to cross stormy seas to win his bride and fight unending battles in order to retain her. The saga of Gudrun, or rather, in its original form, the saga of Gudrun's mother, Hilde, is intimately associated with the Germanic mythology, Hilde being a Valkyrie, and the oldest form of the story is to be found in the later *Edda*. It must, however, at an early date, have been known to the Germans of the Rhineland; Lamprecht, it will be remembered, showed a familiarity with the saga in his *Alexanderlied*.

Gudrun, ca. 1215.

Gudrun is lacking in dramatic unity. The original story, which in itself was hardly long enough to form an epic, was developed, not organically from within, but by the accretion of fresh materials from without. The poet, for instance, not only relates the wooing of Gudrun and the parallel story of her mother Hilde, but, following the example of the Court epics, goes back still farther and describes the adventures of the heroine's grandfather Hagen. This first part of the

[1] Ed. by K. Bartsch, 4th ed., Leipzig, 1880; by E. Martin, Halle, 1901. In D.N.L., *Gudrun* is again edited by K. Bartsch, vol. 6, 1 [1885]. Cp. A. Fécamp, *Le Poème de Gudrun*, Paris, 1892.

epic, which occupies four "Aventiuren," is poetically the least important, and is made up of incidents and situations of frequent occurrence in the poetry of the Spielmann. Hagen, son of an Irish king Sigebant, is, as a boy of seven, carried off by a griffin to a lonely island where he finds three young princesses in the same position as himself; a ship ultimately comes in sight, and, after many vicissitudes, the four adventurers reach Ireland. Hagen marries one of the princesses, Hilde of India. The daughter of this marriage, likewise called Hilde, is very beautiful; her father considers none of her many suitors good enough for her, and hangs their envoys. At last, Hetel, king of the Hegelingen, a mighty Scandinavian king, resolves to make Hilde his queen. Three of his vassals—the sweet singer Horant, the generous Fruote, and the grim "Recke" Wate—set out, disguised as merchants, to woo for their master the king's daughter of Ireland. With the help of costly wares and open-handed generosity, they ingratiate themselves at Hagen's Court, and, one evening, Horant succeeds in winning Hilde's ear by his singing, which is so wondrously sweet that all birds and beasts stop to listen to it. She invites him into the "kemenate," where he has an opportunity of pressing his master's suit. Hilde is not unwilling to marry Hetel, and a plot is arranged to carry her off. The Court is invited to visit the strangers' ships and examine their wares, and while Hilde and her women are on board one of the ships, the men who have accompanied her are thrown into the sea. The ship is pushed off from land, sails are hoisted, oars plied, and Hilde's father is left behind in helpless wrath upon the shore. The three envoys reach Hetel's land in safety with the princess, but on the following morning Hagen's ships are seen approaching the coast. A fierce battle takes place, in which Hagen wounds Hetel, but is himself wounded by Wate. Hilde now intercedes as peacemaker; she begs Hetel to separate the combatants, and Hagen is reconciled to his daughter's marriage. Hilde bears Hetel a son, Ortwin, and a daughter, Gudrun, the latter being even more beautiful than Hilde herself.

Hagen.

Hilde.

Gudrun's story is now virtually a repetition of that of her mother. She, too, is jealously guarded by her father from all suitors. One of these, however, King Herwig of Seeland, has won her heart by his valour, and in a combat between

Gudrun and Herwig.

Herwig and Gudrun's father, Gudrun acts as intercessor, just as Hilde had done in the earlier story. She is then betrothed to Herwig. In the mean time, a disappointed suitor, Siegfried of Morland, makes war upon Herwig's kingdom, and Hetel goes to the assistance of his future son-in-law. Hetel's kingdom is left unprotected, and a third suitor, Hartmut, with his father, King Ludwig of Normandy—or Ormandie, as the poet writes—seizes the opportunity to carry off Gudrun and her maidens. Hetel sets out in pursuit, and a terrible battle takes place upon the island of Wülpensand near the Dutch coast. Gudrun's father is slain by King Ludwig, and in the darkness of the night the Normans escape with their captives. The Hegelingen return home in sorrow, and are obliged to wait patiently until a new generation of fighters has grown up and they feel strong enough to invade the Norman's land.

Gudrun in Normandy.

Meanwhile Gudrun is brought to Normandy, but refuses to marry Hartmut. Hereupon Hartmut's mother, Gerlind, treats her with all manner of cruelty; she is set to the most menial tasks. But Gudrun is resigned to her fate:—

"Dô sprach diu maget edele: 'swaz ich dienen mac
mit willen und mit henden, naht unde tac,
daz sol ich vlîziclîchen tuon in allen stunden,
sît mir mîn ungelücke bî mînen friunden niht ze wesene gunde.'"[1]

As years pass and she still continues firm, a new indignity is put upon her: she is made to wash the clothes of her masters. But even this does not break her proud spirit:—

"ich sol niht haben wünne, ich wolte daz ir mir noch tætet leider."[2]

And for five years and a half, day after day, Gudrun kneels on the shore, washing clothes in the sea. A faithful maid, Hildeburg, shares her task with her.

Thirteen years have now elapsed since the battle on the Wülpensand, and the Hegelingen have again an army with which they can face the Normans. They accordingly set out upon their voyage, and, after many vicissitudes, reach the coast

[1] "Da sprach die edle Jungfrau: 'wie ich (auch immer) dienen kann mit (gutem) Willen und mit Händen, Nacht und Tag, das will ich eifrig zu jeder Zeit thun, seitdem mir mein Unglück nicht gönnte bei meinen Verwandten zu sein'" (xxi, 1053).

[2] "Ich soll nicht haben Wonne; ich wollte, dass ihr mir noch grösseres Leid thätet" (xxi, 1055, 4).

of Normandy. One day as Gudrun is at her work on the shore, an angel comes to her in the form of a bird and tells her of her kinsfolk and her coming rescue. Next morning she and her companion Hildeburg are washing barefoot in the frost and snow as usual, when a boat approaches with two men in it. They are Gudrun's brother Ortwin and her betrothed Herwig. They ask for Gudrun, but Gudrun replies that she whom they seek is long dead. Thereupon the men burst into tears :—

Ortwin and Herwig find Gudrun on the shore.

"Dô sprach der fürste Herwîc : 'jâ riuwet mich ir lîp
ûf mînes lebenes ende. diu maget was mîn wîp.' . . .

'Nu wellet ir mich triegen,' sprach diu arme meit.
'von Herwîges tôde ist mir vil geseit.
al der werlte wünne die solte ich gewinnen,
wære er inder lebende : sô hête er mich gefüeret von hinnen.'

Dô sprach der ritter edele : 'nu seht an mîne hant,
ob ir daz golt erkennet : sô bin ich genant.
dâ mite ich wart gemahelet Kûdrûn ze minnen.
sît ir dann' mîn frouwe, sô füere ich iuch meinlîche hinnen.'" [1]

Gudrun joyfully recognises the ring, and Herwig sees his ring upon Gudrun's finger :—

"Er umbeslôz mit armen die hêrlîchen meit.
in was ir beider mære liep unde leit.
er kuste, i'n weiz wie ofte, die küniginne rîche,
si und Hildeburgen die ellenden maget minniclîche." [2]

Ortwin and Herwig intend to make their attack upon the castle next day before sunrise. Meanwhile Gudrun throws the clothes of her taskmasters into the sea, and enters the castle with the dignity of a queen. She declares herself willing at last to be Hartmut's bride. The Normans provide her and

[1] "Da sprach der Fürst Herwig : 'Fürwahr, ich betraure ihren Leib (*i.e.*, sie) bis zu meines Lebens Ende. Die Jungfrau war mein Weib (*i.e.*, meine Braut).' . . . 'Nun wollt ihr mich betrügen,' sprach die arme Jungfrau. 'Von Herwigs Tode ist mir viel gesagt. Aller Welt Wonne, die sollte ich gewinnen, wäre er irgendwo am Leben ; dann hätte er mich von hinnen geführt.' Da sprach der Ritter edel : 'Nu seht auf meine Hand, ob ihr das Gold erkennt ; so (*i.e.*, wie ihr soeben gesagt habt) bin ich genannt. Damit wurde ich verlobt, Kudrun zur Erinnerung. Wenn ihr denn meine Herrin seid, so führe ich euch mit Gewalt von hinnen'" (XXV, 1245, 1, 2 ; 1246, 1247).

[2] "Er umschloss mit (seinen) Armen die herrliche Jungfrau. Ihnen war die Kunde, die sie einander gegeben hatten, lieb und leid. Er küsste, ich weiss nicht wie oft, die edle Königin, sie und Hildeburg, die elende liebliche Jungfrau" (XXV, 1251).

her maids with garments worthy of them, and give them a rich banquet in the privacy of the "kemenate." Early on the following morning the fight begins. In a fierce combat Herwig succeeds in slaying Ludwig; Hartmut's life is saved by the intercession of his sister Ortrun, who from the first has been Gudrun's friend; he is, however, made prisoner. Wate meanwhile takes fearful "blood-vengeance" upon the rest of the Normans: all are slain except Ortrun, whom Gudrun takes under her protection. Wate strikes off Gerlind's head with words of fiendish irony:—

The defeat of the Normans.

"küniginne hêre,
iu sol mîn juncfrouwe iuwer kleider waschen nimmer mêre."[1]

But the tragic retribution with which *Gudrun* closes is not entirely unrelieved as in the *Nibelungenlied;* for not only is Gudrun united to Herwig, but her brother marries the Norman princess Ortrun, and Hartmut Hildeburg.

Gudrun compared with the *Nibelungenlied.*

The grandeur and simplicity of the *Nibelungenlied* are absent in *Gudrun;* it is an epic of adventure, a Germanic *Odyssey*, rather than a pure tragedy of revenge. The construction, too, as we have seen, is looser, and the poetic kernel of the poem more concealed by subsidiary additions. Even the style of *Gudrun* is unequal; as it proceeds the epic seems to grow younger. The Hilde romance might be compared with the *Nibelungenlied;* the characters of this part of the poem are drawn with bold and simple lines, and the movement of events offers no psychological complications. In the latter part of the epic, however, where Gudrun herself is the central figure, there is a gentler, less primitive spirit; Christianity has penetrated more deeply, and the motives of the characters are prompted by the courtly ethics of the twelfth century. The *technique*, too, is less naïve; it makes higher claims upon the intelligence of the listener or reader. Gudrun herself is more finely delineated than the women of the *Nibelungenlied;* she is more human and lovable. Indeed, of all the heroines of the popular epic Gudrun shows most resemblance to the characters of the Court epic. Of literary influences upon *Gudrun*, that of the *Nibelungenlied* is naturally strongest; the form of *Gudrun*, its verse, which is a finer development of the

[1] "'Hohe Königin, euch soll meine junge Herrin eure Kleider nimmermehr waschen'" (xxix, 1522, 3, 4).

Nibelungen strophe,[1] and even many of its incidents, are obviously modelled on the older epic. *Gudrun* is supposed to have been written between 1210 and 1215, but the evidence on which this belief is based is slight, and the only existing MS. dates from the beginning of the sixteenth century.

Compared with the *Nibelungenlied* and *Gudrun*, the remaining popular epics of Middle High German literature are of inferior interest. Many of them are Spielmann's epics of the type of *König Rother*, others, again, attempt to reconcile the popular epic with the Court romance. The dominant influence on all is that of the *Nibelungenlied*; without exception, however, the romances of the *Heldenbuch*[2]—the general title under which these poems are grouped—are deficient in the unity of plan and the subordination of the action to one ruling idea, which make the *Nibelungenlied* so great. The longer poems show all the formlessness of the Court epic, without its psychological delicacy; the crude fairy lore of the popular imagination, with its dwarfs and dragons, its giants and witchcraft, was obviously more to the tastes of the audience to which the Spielleute appealed, than were the literary graces of Arthurian romance.

The *Heldenbuch*.

The central figure of the majority of these poems is Theodorich the Great, who, as we have seen, is known as Dietrich of Bern. Indeed, had the many sagas which centre in Dietrich only met with the same good fortune as those of Siegfried and the Burgundians, they too might have been combined to form a great national epic, and one even more representative of the nation's life and thought than the *Nibelungenlied*. For it was Dietrich, not Siegfried, who was the highest popular ideal of a hero in the twelfth century. Dietrich was more of a king and leader of men than the less responsible, less deliberate, if more daring and impulsive, hero of the Rhineland; in Siegfried the popular imagination expressed its delight in its heroes, in Dietrich it expressed its reverential awe for the strong man.

Dietrich von Bern.

[1] The difference between the strophes of the *Nibelungenlied* and of *Gudrun* is that in the latter the second half of the fourth line has five instead of four accentuated syllables; the third and fourth lines have also double instead of single rhymes (*i.e.*, *küniginne, minne; mêre, êre*, in place of rhymes such as *wîp, lîp; genant, lant*). On the date of *Gudrun*, cp. A. E. Schönbach, *Das Christentum in der altdeutschen Heldendichtung*, Graz, 1897, 156 ff.

[2] *Deutsches Heldenbuch*, herausg. von O. Jänicke, E. Martin, A. Amelung and J. Zupitza, 5 vols., Berlin, 1866-73; selections edited by E. Henrici in D.N.L., 7 [1887].

Dietrich appears in all these sagas as wise and earnest, a man who thinks well before he acts, who is slow to be moved to wrath, but relentless in the execution of vengeance. He stands in the background of these stories of the *Heldenbuch*, not inactively like Charles the Great in the Carlovingian romances, or King Arthur in the Court epic, but as a practical ideal of manhood.

Biterolf und Dietlieb.

On *Biterolf und Dietlieb*, a poem written in Austria at the beginning of the thirteenth century, the influence of the Court epic is strong. Like an Arthurian knight, Biterolf has sallied forth from his kingdom at Toledo to prove his mettle at Etzel's Court. Meanwhile his son Dietlieb grows up and feels it his duty to go out into the world to seek his father. After many adventures, father and son ultimately stand face to face in single combat; but a tragic close, like that of the *Hildebrandslied*, is, thanks to Rüdeger's timely intervention, avoided. The poem concludes with the description of a great tournament at Worms, where Dietrich and Siegfried meet in single combat. Less polished than *Biterolf und Dietlieb*, the romance of the *Rosengarten* has more of the character of a Spielmann's epic. According to the saga, Kriemhild possessed a famous "rose-garden" at Worms, which she gave into the keeping of her twelve greatest heroes. In the many conflicts which take place round this rose-garden, Dietrich is always the victor: even Siegfried is obliged to flee from him under Kriemhild's protection.

The *Rosengarten.*

Laurin.

In another poem, *Laurin und der kleine Rosengarten*,[1] one of the most charming of all these medieval "Volksmärchen," the rose-garden of Worms is transferred to the Tyrol, where a dwarf Laurin watches over it. Whoever breaks the silken thread with which the garden is surrounded, must forfeit his right foot and his left hand. Dietrich and Witege resolve to undertake the adventure. With the help of Meister Hildebrand they overcome the dwarf, and compel him to open up to them his subterranean kingdom. But Laurin is treacherous: he gives the heroes a sleeping-draught and makes them prisoners. Thus, more dangers and adventures have to be gone through before Laurin is once more caught and carried off in triumph to Verona. The *Eckenlied* has for

The *Eckenlied.*

[1] The latest edition, Halle, 1897, is by G. Holz, who has also edited the *Rosengarten*, Halle, 1893.

its subject Dietrich's conflicts with the giant Ecke and his brother Fasolt, in the Tyrolese forests. Later poems, again, tell of his adventures with the giant *Sigenot*, with a dwarf king *Goldemar*,[1] and of the deeds which he wrought in the service of Queen *Virginal*. The ultimate basis of all these giant stories is obviously the same mythological idea which lies behind the *Nibelungenlied* and *Gudrun*, namely, the conflict of sunshine and storm, of light and darkness, which made so deep an impression on the imagination of all Aryan peoples. Dietrich, no less than Beowulf or Siegfried, was originally a god of light.

Alpharts Tod.

The noblest epic of the Dietrich cycle is *Alpharts Tod*; no other poem of this group shows so much of the tragic dignity of the *Nibelungenlied*. Although probably written in the second half of the thirteenth century, we may think of it as an episode in the great unwritten *Dietrich* epic. Alphart is a young hero in Dietrich's army who, in spite of warnings, sets out from Verona to watch Ermanarich's movements. After much brave fighting against unfair odds, he falls by reason of his own generosity, being killed by the treachery of Witege, whose life he has spared.

Dietrichs Flucht.

In *Dietrichs Flucht*, again, we have what might have formed the beginning of the *Dietrich* epic. Unfortunately, however, this beginning was made too late. The Austrian Spielmann—he calls himself Heinrich der Vogler—who wrote *Dietrichs Flucht* and the romance of the *Rabenschlacht* (*i.e.*, "Ravenna-Schlacht"), which immediately follows it, lived at the close of the thirteenth century, when the best period of the popular epic was over.

The *Rabenschlacht.*

The subject of these epics is Dietrich's feud with Ermanarich, and the treason of his own vassals Witege and Heime. Dietrich is compelled to seek help from Etzel; he marries Etzel's niece, and, with the help of the Huns, makes repeated inroads into Ermanarich's kingdom. At the battle of Ravenna, Dietrich's combat with the traitor Witege stands in the foreground of events. The latter has slain Etzel's two young sons, and Dietrich is in pursuit of him. They reach the shore of the sea; Witege seems lost, when suddenly a nixe of his own kin appears and carries him beneath the waves, beyond the reach

[1] *Goldemar* is one of the few poems of its class to which the author's name is attached, Albrecht von Kemenaten. Whether Albrecht also wrote other poems of this group it is impossible to determine, as only a few short fragments of *Goldemar* have been preserved.

of Dietrich's vengeance. The style of both these poems is wearisome and diffuse, and shows all the faults of the decaying epic.

Besides the cycle of romances centring in Dietrich, the *Heldenbuch* contains two stories, those of *Ortnit* and *Wolfdietrich*, which, although not immediately connected with the Dietrich cycle, have certain points of contact with it.

Ortnit.

Ortnit is a characteristic Spielmann's romance of the best period, the earlier years of the thirteenth century. The hero is King of Lamparten (Lombardy), and resides at Garten (Garda). Like King Rother and so many other heroes of this class of epic, he resolves to marry a foreign princess, and with the help of his dwarf, Alberich, he succeeds in carrying her off. His father-in-law takes a peculiar revenge by sending a brood of dragons into Ortnit's country, Ortnit himself being killed by one of these animals. The same Spielmann who wrote *Ortnit* was also probably the author of the version of *Wolfdietrich* which follows it in the MSS. King Hugdietrich of Constantinople—with whom there may possibly be blended the tradition of a Merovingian king, Theodorich—has two sons; a third is born while he is away from home, and shows such strength that the devil is rumoured to have been his father. Hugdietrich, whose suspicions are aroused by his vassal Sabene, intrusts the faithful Duke Berchtung of Meran with the task of killing the child. Berchtung has not the heart to take its life, but leaves it by a pool of water in the forest, in the hope that it will try to pluck the water-lilies growing in the pool and fall in. But the child plays happily all day long, and when the beasts of the forest come down to drink in the moonlight they leave it unmolested, a group of wolves even sitting round it in a circle. Next day Berchtung gives the child, whom he calls Wolfdietrich, to a peasant to bring up. The king repents, Wolfdietrich is brought back, and the evil councillor is banished; but the king has already divided his kingdom among his sons, and Wolfdietrich, who is placed under Berchtung's care, goes empty-handed. After Hugdietrich's death the banished vassal Sabene returns, and again raises the rumour of Wolfdietrich's supernatural origin. Hugdietrich's queen is in consequence exiled, and finds refuge with Berchtung, who, with his sixteen sons, stands on Wolfdietrich's side in his feud with his brothers. A

Wolfdietrich.

great battle takes place in which the brothers are defeated but escape, while on Wolfdietrich's side none is left but Wolfdietrich himself, Duke Berchtung, and ten of his sons. The enemy returns with a fresh army and hems them in; the hero himself, however, succeeds in making his escape to the Court of King Ortnit, from whom he hopes to gain assistance. But Ortnit is already dead, and it falls to Wolfdietrich to take up the conflict with the dragons. Here the oldest version of the story of Wolfdietrich breaks off. It is told with the fresh vigour which characterises the work of the earlier thirteenth century, but in the continuation, written by a much later poet, the degeneration of the Spielmann's art is plainly visible. Wolfdietrich succeeds in killing the dragons, and becomes King of Lamparten. Then he goes out in quest of his faithful vassals. Berchtung has in the mean time died, and his ten sons are prisoners in Constantinople. These Wolfdietrich rescues; he takes revenge upon his enemies, and ultimately retires to a monastery. Of three other versions of the *Wolfdietrich* saga which have been preserved either complete or in fragments, none can be compared with the oldest. In one of these versions there is a long introduction, relating Hugdietrich's love-adventures with Hildburg, who is kept prisoner by her father in a tower. To this tower Hugdietrich gains access in the disguise of a woman.

Duke Berchtung and his sons.

Hugdietrich.

The poetic kernel of the epics of *Wolfdietrich* is the relation of Berchtung and his sons to the hero. Clearer here than ever shines the old Germanic conception of unswerving loyalty. Berchtung is the incorporation of this loyalty, which, more than anything else, gives the tone to the whole "Volksepos." If we look back on the motives that have actuated all these heroes and heroines of the sagas, Siegfried as well as Hagen, Kriemhild as well as Gudrun, Dietrich, and Berchtung, it will be found that the first and highest place always belongs to *diu triuwe*.

CHAPTER V.

THE COURT EPIC: HEINRICH VON VELDEKE, HARTMAN AND WOLFRAM.

A NOTEWORTHY feature of the two great epochs of German literary history is the shortness of their duration: events of the first magnitude crowded with confusing rapidity upon one another, and, within the narrow limits of a decade, masterpieces were produced such as, in other literatures, are spread over generations. In Italy, for instance, Dante was dead before Petrarch and Boccaccio began to write: sixty years lay between the *Orlando furioso* and the *Gerusalemme liberata*. But in Germany, all that is greatest in Middle High German poetry was written at the turn of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, within the space of thirty years; when Goethe was born, the *Blütezeit* of New High German literature had only begun, when he died it was already over. The shortness, or rather concentration, of the earlier period is less easy to account for than that of the modern classical period; no law can explain why great popular epics like the *Nibelungenlied* and *Gudrun*, masterpieces of the Court epic like *Parzival* and *Tristan*, and the finest lyrics in the whole range of medieval literature, should have originated, if not simultaneously, at least within a very few years of one another. Compared with this, French medieval literature seems to have a long and steady record behind it, and it cannot be said that the conditions in Germany from the eleventh to the fourteenth century were more unfavourable to literary production than in France.

The Court epic.

The beginnings of the Court epic in Germany have already been traced in the clerical poetry of Lamprecht and Konrad, and in the half-popular, half-courtly *Tristrant* of Eilhart von

Oberge. The traditions of the thirteenth century, ignoring these beginnings, point unanimously to Heinrich von Veldeke as the founder of this class of epic: Gottfried von Strassburg says of him—

Heinrich von Veldeke.

> "er impete das êrste rîs
> in tiutescher zungen:
> dâ von sît este ersprungen,
> von den die bluomen kamen."[1]

Although this may not be strictly in accordance with facts, Heinrich von Veldeke must at least be recognised as the first of the Court poets to attain a technical perfection in his art.

Like the unknown authors of *Rother* and *Herzog Ernst*, Heinrich von Veldeke came from the Lower Rhineland; his family belonged to the neighbourhood of Maestricht. Educated probably for the Church, he was not without learning, and about 1170 translated into German verses the legend of Servatius, the patron saint of Maestricht. Heinrich's *Servatius*[2] does not, however, rise above the level of the legendary poetry of the time. His fame as an epic poet rests exclusively upon his romance of Æneas, the *Eneit*.[3] Not Virgil, but the French *Roman d'Eneas*, is the source of Heinrich's epic. In the hands of the French author, the *Æneid* had already been converted into an epic of chivalry; the scenery, the costumes, and the whole atmosphere of the poem are of the twelfth century; the loves of Æneas and Dido, of Turnus and Lavinia, these are the themes on which the gallantry of the French poet loves to linger: in other words, the calm, classical spirit of Virgil has disappeared behind the brilliant phantasmagoria of medieval society. Out of this many-coloured French romance, Heinrich von Veldeke formed his *Eneit*. Like all the Court poets, he is anything but a faithful translator; he curtails or extends his original as seems good to him, and his alterations are generally improvements. The Germanic spirit shows itself in the endeavour to deepen the psychology of the original, to lay more emphasis upon the motives which actuate the characters. Most important of all, Heinrich has succeeded in completely transplanting the French

Servatius, ca. 1170.

Eneit, ca. 1175-86.

[1] "Er impfte das erste Reis in deutscher Zunge; davon entsprangen dann Äste, von welchen die Blumen kamen" (*Tristan*, 4736-39).

[2] Ed. P. Piper in *Die höfische Epik*, 1 (D.N.L., 4, 1 [1892]), 81 ff.

[3] Ed. O. Behagel, Heilbronn, 1882; also D.N.L., *l.c.*, 241 ff.

poem into his own literature; it has become German — German in language, German in spirit and in the music of its verses.

The *Eneit* is a book with a history. Before Heinrich had finished it he gave it to his patroness, the Gräfin of Cleves, who was betrothed to Landgraf Ludwig III. of Thuringia. At her marriage the manuscript passed into the hands of a Graf Heinrich, who sent it to Thuringia, where it was remodelled in the dialect of Central Germany. To the poet himself, it was lost for nine years; at last, the great patron of German medieval literature, Landgraf Herman — then still Saxon Pfalzgraf—returned it to him that he might finish it in Thuringia. Thus, although begun in the early 'seventies, the *Eneit* was not completed until about 1186.

Herbort von Fritzlar.

Towards the beginning of the thirteenth century, Heinrich von Veldeke's example in acclimatising the French romance of antiquity found an imitator in Herbort von Fritzlar, a clerical poet of Hesse, who, also under the patronage of Landgraf Herman, prepared a German version of Benoît de Sainte More's *Roman de Troie*. This French romance is drawn in the main from two sources, which the middle ages regarded as authentic records of the Trojan war—that of the pretended Phrygian Dares, whose sympathies were with Troy, and who was consequently given the preference, and that of the Cretan Dictys, who was on the side of the Greeks. These writings, together with a short Latin epitome of the *Iliad*, formed the foundation for the widely spread Trojan saga of pre-Renaissance literature. The *Liet von Troye*[1] is more than 18,000 lines long, and belongs to a much lower literary plane than the *Eneit*. Herbort has not his predecessor's ability to maintain the reader's interest. He curtails rather than extends his original, and what he adds to it does not bear witness to much poetic originality.

Albrecht von Halberstadt.

With Heinrich von Veldeke and Herbort von Fritzlar it is usual to associate another clerical poet, Albrecht von Halberstadt, the head of the convent school in the monastery of Jechaburg, who, in 1210, translated Ovid's *Metamorphoses* into German verse.[2] This earliest German Ovid, of which, un-

[1] Cp. P. Piper. *Die höfische Epik*, 1 (D.N.L., 4, 1 [1892]), 282 ff.

[2] Ed. P. Piper in D.N.L., 4, 1 [1892], 338 ff. Cp. K. Bartsch, *Albrecht von Halberstadt*, Quedlinburg, 1861.

fortunately, only a very short fragment has been preserved, is a direct translation from the Latin, not by way of the French. There is thus more of the spirit of antiquity here than in either the *Eneit* or the *Liet von Troye*, but Albrecht is under the influence of the literary models of his time: in translating the classical images, he falls back with preference upon the conventional phrases of the French epic. His poetic talent was not great, and his book—which also seems to have been inspired by the Landgraf of Thuringia—was not very widely read. The subject, as may be inferred from the popularity of Jörg Wickram's version (1545) of Albrecht's *Metamorphosen*, was more to the taste of the sixteenth century than of the middle ages.

To these first Court epics, which are grouped round Heinrich von Veldeke, belong also two Middle German poems from French sources, written about the beginning of the thirteenth century — namely, *Athis und Prophilias*, which, to judge from the few fragments that have been preserved, was possibly the work of a Spielmann, and *Eraclius*, a strange medley of Christian fervour and Epicurean worldliness.[1]

Athis und Prophilias.

Eraclius.

But the master-poets who were to bring the Court epic to perfection were not, like most of the poets hitherto considered, natives of North or Middle Germany; they were, without exception, High Germans. The first of these in point of time, Hartman von Aue, was a Swabian. He belonged to the lower nobility, and stood in the relation of "dienstman" or vassal to a noble Herr von Aue, whose castle was probably at what is now Obernau, near Rotenburg on the Neckar. But the localisation of Aue, like most facts in Hartman's life, is largely a matter of conjecture. Before going out into the world he received a scholarly education in some monastery. An unhappy love affair seems to have thrown a shadow over his life, and the death of his liege lord was another sorrow to him. These were perhaps the reasons for his abjuring his worldly life and joining the unfortunate crusade of 1196-97. He may have been born about 1170; in 1210,

Hartman von Aue, ca. 1170-1215.

[1] Ed. W. Grimm, Berlin, 1846, and H. Graef (*Quellen und Forschungen*, 50), Strassburg, 1883. Heinrich von Veldeke's influence is also noticeable in the romance of *Moriz von Craon*, edited by E. Schröder in *Zwei altdeutsche Rittermæren*, Berlin, 1894. Cp. D.N.L., 2, 2, 301 ff.

Gottfried von Strassburg speaks of him as a living contemporary, but he was dead before 1220.[1]

Hartman's two *Büchlein.*

To the earlier years of Hartman's life belong his lyrics, which will be discussed later, and the first of two longer poems of the class known at that time as *Büchlein*, or "love epistles." In his first *Büchlein* or *Klage*, the poet pours out his sorrows at his lady's feet, in the form of a dialogue between body and heart, modelled on the dialogues of "Soul and Body," which are to be met with in the early stages of all Western literatures. Hartman's authorship of the second "kleinez büechel," the tone of which is less restrained than that of the first, is doubtful; but if not by Hartman, it is at least by a poet who was influenced by him. Of his four epic poems, *Erec* is the earliest, and may have been written in 1191 or 1192; *Iwein*, on the other hand, is much riper, and was probably composed at least ten years later; between *Erec* and *Iwein* falls *Gregorius*. Hartman's fourth poem, *Der arme Heinrich*, may possibly have been written before *Iwein*, but there is more likelihood that it was his last work.

Arthurian romance.

Erec is a landmark of importance, for, apart from the crude *Tristrant* of Eilhart, it is the first Arthurian romance in German literature. The historical origin of the legends which centre in King Artus or Arthur has been traced to the conflicts between Kelt and Anglo-Saxon in the sixth century; other authorities, again, incline to the view that these legends originated in the remote past of the Kelts of Brittany. However this may be, the Arthurian legend, as it concerns us here, first appears in a romantic Latin history of the twelfth century by Geoffrey of Monmouth. This history was translated into French by Wace, and provided Crestien de Troyes with the materials for his epics. With Crestien, the Arthurian legend became the chosen theme for the poetry of chivalry: in his hands all that was Keltic or purely national was stripped off; King Arthur himself, instead of being an active champion of knighthood, became, like Charles the Great in the Carlovingian sagas, a figure in the background, a calm ideal of the highest knightly life. About King Arthur gathered

[1] A serviceable edition of Hartman's works is that by F. Bech, 3 vols., 3rd ed., Leipzig, 1891-93. Selections, edited by P. Piper, will be found in D.N.L., 4, 2 [1893], 1 ff. Cp. A. E. Schönbach, *Über Hartmann von Aue*, Graz, 1894, and T. Piquet, *Étude sur Hartmann d'Aue*, Paris, 1898.

the young heroes of the Round Table, each of whom became in his own way the centre of a story and an exemplar of chivalry. The Arthurian legend, although thus Keltic in its origins, was identified with the life and ideals of the twelfth century; as a channel of literary expression it was preferred to the sagas of antiquity, of Charles the Great, or even to the legends that sprang up round events of the more immediate past; and in Germany, to a greater degree than in France, it served for the highest flights of medieval poetry.

Erec.

To Crestien de Troyes, Hartman is indebted for the originals of his two Arthurian epics, *Erec* and *Iwein*.[1] Erec, a young knight of the Round Table, wins the hand of Enite, the daughter of a poor Graf, and in his excess of love for her neglects his duties as a knight. His friends blame Enite for her husband's sloth, and she is filled with sorrow. Erec, accidentally overhearing her plaints, bids her prepare at once for a journey; he arms himself, and both set out into the world, Enite, whom he has forbidden to speak a word, riding before him like a common squire. In the adventures which befall them, Enite, by warning her husband and thus disobeying his commands, repeatedly saves his life, until at last, after the most terrible fight of all, he falls insensible and his wife believes him dead. In heartrending tones she pours out her grief to the forest, and is about to slay herself with Erec's sword, when a stranger finds her and takes her, and her dead husband with her, to his castle. It soon appears, however, that the stranger's motives are not of the purest: Enite's cries awaken her husband from his swoon; he slays her persecutor and rescues her. This is, properly speaking, the end of the story; but the poet adds still another adventure, in which Erec overcomes a knight, whose wife has made him promise never to leave her side until he is vanquished in single combat.

Iwein.

Although adhering more closely to its French original than *Erec*, Hartman's second romance is more beautiful in its language, more harmonious in style and form, and finer in its psychology; indeed, *Iwein* is the most perfectly proportioned of all the German Arthurian epics. The hero's spirit of adventure is stimulated by a story which one of his

[1] *Erec*, ed. M. Haupt, 2nd ed., Leipzig, 1871; *Iwein*, ed. E. Henrici, Halle, 1891-93.

fellow-knights relates of a magic spring in the heart of a great forest. If any one pour water from this spring upon a stone that lies near it, a storm arises, and the lord of the spring appears to challenge the intruder. Artus proposes to undertake the adventure after the lapse of a fortnight, but Iwein secretly resolves to try his fortune beforehand. He successfully overcomes and slays the keeper of the spring, but finds himself a prisoner between two portcullises in the latter's castle. From this position he escapes with the aid of the queen's maid, Lunete, who endows him with invisibility; he loves and wins the love of Laudine, the widowed queen, and when Artus and his Court arrive at the spring, he is the knight who successfully defends it. He entertains the Court in the castle, and when they depart, Gawain warns him not to forget, like Erec, the duties of knighthood in his love for Laudine. But Iwein is a hero of another kind; he leaves his wife, and, in his quest of adventures, forgets his vow to return to her at the end of a year. When Lunete, who has been sent by Laudine in quest of him, reminds him of his vow, he is so overwhelmed that he goes mad and lives for a time naked in the forest. After he has been restored to health, he has still other trials and adventures to go through—amongst them, one in which he rescues a lion, and the last and hardest of all in which he overcomes Gawain—before he finds his queen again and is reconciled to her.

Gregorius. Hartman's legend of *Gregorius*, "der guote sündære," was in all probability written about the same time as his religious poetry: like the latter, it bears witness to the revulsion of feeling which set in with the tragic change in the poet's life. Asceticism has here taken the place of the careless *joie de vivre* of Arthurian chivalry. It is a strange legend this of St Gregory, a legend which unites the Greek idea of destiny, as it appears in the saga of Œdipus, with the Christian belief in the power of repentance. Gregorius is the child of a brother and sister and marries his own mother. When he learns the terrible truth, he has himself chained to a lonely rock in the sea, where for seventeen years his only nourishment is the water that drops upon the stone. At the end of his long penance, he is ordained Pope by the voice of God.

Der arme Heinrich. *Der arme Heinrich* is another example of the treatment of

the monastic legend in the style of the Court epic, but its religious fervour is less ruthless than that of *Gregorius*. There is an odour of monastic asceticism still clinging to it, but the poet is clearly on the way to a more harmonious conception of life. In certain respects *Der arme Heinrich* is the most charming and delicate of all Hartman's poems; it has none of the wider issues of *Iwein*, but, on the other hand, it lies more within the sphere of modern sympathies. An idyll rather than an epic, it is the first example of that class of poetry which in New High German literature culminates in *Hermann und Dorothea*. For *Der arme Heinrich*, Hartman had no French model. It is probable that he found the legend in some Latin chronicle of the family in whose service he stood. The "arme Heinrich" of the poem is a certain Heinrich von Aue, who, at the height of his prosperity, is struck with leprosy. There is only one remedy for the disease—the blood of a young girl who is ready to sacrifice herself voluntarily for him. The daughter of a farmer, with whom he has taken refuge, offers herself, although hardly more than a child, as the sacrifice. At the last moment, however, when Heinrich hears the knife which is to take her life being whetted, he repents: he calls to the physician to stay his hand:—

"ditz kind ist alsô wünneclich.
zwâre jâ enmac ich
sînen tôt niht gesehen.
gottes wille müeze an mir geschehen.
wir suln sî wider ûf lân." [1]

The disease disappears by a miracle, and the girl, who has thus saved Heinrich's life, ultimately becomes his wife.

Hartman's style.

The chief charm of Hartman's poetry for us is one of form, a charm of flowing narrative,[2] of vivid pictures, of delicately balanced style. In a higher degree than any other of Crestien's German imitators, Hartman has learned the French

[1] "Dies Kind ist so wonniglich. Ich kann fürwahr ihren Tod nicht sehen. Gottes Wille möge an mir geschehen. Wir sollen sie wieder auf lassen" (ll. 1273-77). The metre of the Middle High German Court epic consists of simple rhymed couplets, each of which contains four stress syllables.

[2] Cp. Gottfried von Strassburg's lines on Hartman:—

"Wie lûter und wie reine
sîn kristallînîu wortelîn
beidiu sint und iemer müezen sîn!"
—*Tristan*, 4626 ff.

master's art of telling a story. Crestien's blunt, straightforward realism, however, is absent; Hartman polishes, refines, even moralises, where Crestien is content to entertain. And behind the formal beauty of his work, we look in vain for much to interest us. His poetry is rich in strong contrasts and conflicts, as his own life probably was; it bears the stamp of a dualism, which is to be found more or less in all medieval imaginative work. But Hartman is not a brooding thinker like Wolfram von Eschenbach; he does not try to understand the dualism which he feels so keenly; his aim is rather to discover some golden mean between a worldly life on the one side and asceticism on the other. "Moderation," *diu mâze*, is his watchword in all things — in his thoughts as in his style. Poets of this type do not mark epochs in the literature of the world, but, to uncouth ages, they teach the lesson of form and measured beauty. It is only unfortunate that Hartman's influence upon his successors was not greater than was actually the case; for the crying evil of the entire Court epic is its want of *mâze*.

Wolfram von Eschenbach, ca. 1170-1220.

Wolfram von Eschenbach, the second of the three chief poets of the Court epic, is the greatest German poet of the middle ages, the greatest poet in modern European literature before the dawn of the Renaissance. Of his life we know nothing except what he himself tells us. He may have been born about 1170 and he died about 1220. *Parzival* was composed in the same decade that saw the production of Hartman's and Gottfried's masterpieces, of Walther's finest lyrics, the first decade of the twelfth century, the most brilliant in the history of medieval literature. Wolfram takes his name from the little Bavarian town of Eschenbach, which lies several miles to the south-east of Ansbach; here he was probably born, and he may also have been a vassal in the service of a Graf von Wertheim, who had possessions in the neighbourhood. He was not a learned poet like Hartman; he boasts that he could neither read nor write; but this is certainly not to be taken too strictly, for his literary knowledge was wide. The comparative illiterateness on Wolfram's part may, however, explain the peculiarly natural tone of his verse: he seems less trammelled by literary conventions than the ordinary Court poet. He has little of Hartman's moderation, and his fondness for mysticism and obscurity

Wolfram's naturalness.

brought upon him the displeasure of his contemporary, Gottfried von Strassburg.[1] His verses re-echo the fresh, clear notes of the great national epics, which, as we have seen, were most alive in South Germany. His own communings with nature, and his love for the forest, for its birds, its sunshine, and its gloomy depths, have passed over into his poetry irrespective of all canons of a courtly art; his sturdy humour is always ready to burst the boundaries of a polite irony.

Like so many of his contemporaries, Wolfram von Eschenbach enjoyed the protection of the Landgraf Herman of Thuringia; he was repeatedly a guest of this generous patron in the Wartburg at Eisenach, and there is ground for believing that at least the sixth and seventh books of *Parzival* were composed in the Wartburg shortly after the summer of 1203. It was, moreover, at the Landgraf's suggestion that Wolfram undertook his *Willehalm;* he was still engaged on this poem when Herman died in 1217, and was himself overtaken by death before he had had time to finish it. He lies buried in the Frauenkirche of Eschenbach.[2]

The sources of Wolfram's *Parzival* are wrapped in a mystery which it is hopeless to try to pierce. Only one version of the story is known to which he could have had access—namely, Crestien de Troyes' *Perceval le Gallois ou le Conte del Graal;* and this poem Wolfram has undoubtedly followed closely; but it was not his only source. From Crestien we learn nothing of Gahmuret, Parzival's father, whose adventures fill the first two books of the German epic, and the contents of the last three of the sixteen books are also not to be found in the unfinished French romance. Moreover, Wolfram differs in many points of detail from Crestien. The German poet himself cites as his authority a certain Provençal singer, Kyot (Guiot), whose version he considers more correct than Crestien's, but no mention of this Kyot is to be found in either French or German sources. The sources of *Parzival.*

The *Parzival* saga, which is, at bottom, akin to the tales

[1] *Tristan*, 4636 ff.

[2] The *editio princeps* of Wolfram is that by K. Lachmann, 5th ed., Berlin, 1891; a convenient edition of *Parzival* and *Titurel* by K. Bartsch, 3 vols., 2nd ed., Leipzig, 1875-77; these epics have also been edited by E. Martin, 1, Halle, 1900. In D.N.L. Wolfram is edited by P. Piper (5, 1-4 [1890-93]). Cp. San Marte, *Leben und Dichten Wolfram von Eschenbachs*, 3rd. ed., Halle, 1886. Of modern German translations of *Parzival* the best are by G. Böttticher, Berlin, 1895, and W. Hertz, Stuttgart, 1898.

of simpletons in folklore, was not originally part of the Arthurian cycle, but seems at an early date to have become associated with it. Crestien had already caught a glimpse of the deeper significance of the fool who, in his very guilelessness, discovers the Gral, but it remained for the German poet to invest the story with its full spiritual meaning. Wolfram is inferior to Crestien in the art of story-telling, but he is the greater poet. *Parzival* is more than an enthralling epic of chivalry; it is the history of a human soul which passes through life and its temptations, untarnished by *zwîvel*, by vacillation of character. Wolfram's hero is, to quote the opening lines of the poem, no "magpie" hero, half white, half black: his soul is spotless; he is the exemplar of what to Wolfram, as to the poets of the popular epic, was the highest virtue, *diu triuwe*.

Parzival's father.

The first two books of the epic are occupied with the history of Parzival's father, Gahmuret of Anjou, who, like so many brave souls in the age of the Crusades, seeks his fortune in the East. Coming to the Moorish country of Zazamanc, he wins the hand of its queen, Belakane, but before their son Feirefiz is born, Gahmuret's restless spirit has driven him out once more in quest of adventure. At a great tournament in France, the prize, Queen Herzeloyde of Waleis (Valois), falls to him; he annuls his marriage with the heathen Mooress and Herzeloyde becomes his wife. But even yet he cannot rest; he goes out again into the world, and falls in battle, in the service of the Caliph of Bagdad. Shortly after the news of Gahmuret's death has reached Herzeloyde, their son Parzival is born, and, to preserve him from the temptations which had proved so fatal to his father, Herzeloyde withdraws from her Court, into the solitude of a forest.

Parzival in the forest.

Here young Parzival grows up, shorn of all the glory and ignorant of all the ceremony that surrounds a king's son:—

"Bogen unde bölzelîn
die sneit er mit sîn selbes hant,
und schôz vil vogele, die er vant.
swenne ab er den vogel erschôz,
des schal von sange ê was sô grôz,
sô weinde er unde roufte sich,
an sîn hâr kêrt' er gerich.
sîn lîp was klâr unde fier:
ûf dem plân am rivier

twuog er sich alle morgen.
er'n kunde niht gesorgen,
ez enwære ob im der vogelsanc,
die süeze in sîn herze dranc:
daz erstracte im sîniu brüstelîn.
al weinde er lief zer künegîn.
sô sprach sie 'wer hât dir getân?
du wær' hin ûz ûf den plân.'
er'n kunde es ir gesagen niht,
als kinden lîhte noch geschiht."[1]

From his mother's lips he learns that though God "is brighter than the day, yet His countenance is as the countenances of men." To Him Parzival must turn in time of need, for He is always ready with His help. One day, wandering farther than usual from home, he meets three knights clad in armour; remembering his mother's words, he thinks each of them must be a god and falls on his knees before them. From them he acquires the knowledge his mother would fain have kept from him—namely, what knighthood is, and that this knighthood comes from King Artus (Arthur). He cannot rest until he has reached the Court of Artus and become a knight; but his mother dresses him in a fool's dress, in the hope that he may be laughed at and frightened home again to her. Thus ends this idyll of the forest, and Parzival sallies out into the world, in all the foolishness of perfect innocence.

Parzival goes out into the world.

A tragic fate now begins to envelop Parzival's life. Unknown to him, the parting with his mother has broken her heart; in naïve and childlike obedience to the advice she has given him, he robs a great lady of ring and brooch, and thereby unconsciously brings upon the lady the hardest of trials. In conflict with the Red Knight, Ither, he kills him with his *gabylôt*, in guileless ignorance of the laws of chivalry, which forbid the use of this weapon. From Artus's camp, before Nantes, he sallies forth once more and reaches the

Parzival in Gurnemanz's castle.

[1] "Bogen und kleine Bolzen, [die] schnitt er mit eigner Hand und schoss viel Vögel, die er fand. Wenn er aber den Vogel erschossen hatte, dessen Gesanges Schall vorher so laut war, so weinte er und raufte sich (das Haar); an seinem Haare liess er seine Rache aus. Sein Leib war schön und stattlich; auf dem Plan am Bache wusch er sich alle Morgen. Er wusste nichts von Sorgen, es wäre denn der Vogelgesang über ihm, der süss in sein Herz drang; das dehnte ihm sein Brüstlein aus. [All] weinend lief er zur Königin. Da sprach sie: 'Wer hat dir (etwas) gethan? Du bist hinaus (gegangen) auf den Plan.' Er konnte es ihr nicht sagen, wie es Kindern leicht noch (jetzt) geschieht" (118, 4-22).

castle of the old knight Gurnemanz of Graharz, who receives him hospitably, and teaches him the wisdom of life and the laws of knighthood. Once more he sets out, still innocent of wrong, but no longer a simpleton, and by his first knightly deed wins the heart and hand of the beautiful young queen Condwiramurs, who becomes his wife. The yearning to see his mother, of whose death he does not learn till later, is the occasion for Parzival's next journey. Towards evening on the first day he arrives at a lake, and inquires of some fishers where he may find a night's lodging. The most distinguished among the fishers directs Parzival to a castle in the neighbourhood, where he will himself be his host. Here he is well received and led into a hall where sit four hundred knights; his host, beside whom he is placed, suffers from a wound that will not heal, and is no other than King Anfortas, the King of the Gral. The mystic ceremony of the Gral, a precious stone of wondrous power,[1] is now gone through before him; Parzival sees the bleeding spear borne through the hall, and hears the wailing and groaning of the knights at its sight; and through a half-open door he catches a glimpse of King Titurel, old and ashen pale. But he sees and hears all this in silence; no question as to why Anfortas has to suffer, or what this mystic ceremony means, crosses his lips, for Gurnemanz has taught him not to be over-curious. Next morning, when he wakens, he finds the company of the previous evening gone, and wanders out again into the forest; too late he learns that he has been in the castle of Munsalväsche, the castle of the Gral. Not, however, until he has reached the camp of Artus, and been received with all honours at the Round Table, does he learns how serious has been his omission to ask Anfortas why he suffered. The sorceress Cundrie, the ill-favoured messenger of the Gral, suddenly appears and curses Parzival for his lack of sympathy. His guilt now rises before him in all its blackness: dishonoured and imbittered, he leaves Artus's table to seek the Gral and repair his fatal omission. In

Condwiramurs.

The Gral.

Cundrie.

[1] The Gral of the saga was originally a vessel which was always full: in a later, religious version, it became identified with the cup from which Christ drank at the Last Supper and in which Joseph of Arimathea received His blood when He was nailed on the cross. To Crestien and Wolfram, it is a precious stone with miraculous powers of supplying meat and drink; but once a year, on Good Friday, these powers need to be renewed by a dove from heaven.

his despair he again asks the childish question he had put to his mother in the forest, "Wê, waz ist got? Were He mighty, He would not have brought such shame upon me! I have served Him since I have known the meaning of His mercy; now I shall serve Him no longer. If He hateth me, I will bear it!"[1] And so for five long years Parzival wanders through the world, at war with God, at war with himself, doubting, fighting, seeking,—above all, filled with a deep longing for the Gral, whose glories he has culpably forfeited, and for the beloved wife, whom he will not see until the Gral is found again. But his manly courage is still untarnished, his heart is still strong, his life free from all taint of *valsch* or *zwîvel*. Parzival's despair.

Meanwhile Wolfram's romance centres in the Arthurian knight Gawan, and Parzival falls into the background. After many adventures and trials, Gawan wins the love of the proud beauty Orgeluse, who had brought upon Anfortas his unhappy fate, and whom Parzival, constant in his love for Condwiramurs, alone withstands. Gawan then successfully undergoes the adventures of the Magic Bed in Clinschor's castle, and sets free the women whom Clinschor had kept as prisoners. These adventures savour of the crasser elements of the popular epics, but the books in which they are contained (7-8, 10-12) are not devoid of poetic charm; the childish Obilot and the haughty Orgeluse, for instance, are two of the most interesting portraits in all Wolfram's gallery of women, while the brave Gawan himself is a sympathetic figure, and serves, if unintentionally, as an artistic foil to the pure, unworldly Parzival. Gawan's adventures.

One Good Friday morning, when the ground is covered with a thin coating of snow, Parzival meets some pilgrims in the forest, an old knight with his wife and daughters. The knight reproaches Parzival for bearing arms on so holy a day; but Parzival knows nothing of holy days, for he has long been at enmity with God. The old man begs him to seek out a hermit who lives in the forest, and to unbosom himself of his load of sin. Repentance begins at last to steal into Parzival's soul; he lets his horse wander whither it will, saying, if God be really so mighty, He will guide it. The horse brings him to the hermit, who turns out to be Trevrizent, brother of Parzival and Trevrizent.

[1] 332, 1 ff.

Anfortas and Herzeloyde, Parzival's own uncle. With the simple words—

"hêr, nu gebêt mir rât:
ich bin ein man der sünde hât,"[1]—

he presents himself to Trevrizent. For fifteen days Parzival shares the hermit's cell, confesses everything to him, and learns from him the path he must follow if he will again find the Gral, whose mysteries Trevrizent first fully reveals to him. Before Cundrie seeks him out once more, this time that he may ask the question of sympathy and himself become King of the Gral, he has two battles to fight; in the first of these he overcomes Gawan, and in the second his own half-brother Feirefiz. With the reunion of Parzival to Condwiramurs and their two sons, of whom the elder, Loherangrin (Lohengrin), is to succeed him as King of the Gral, the poem closes.

Parzival as King of the Gral.

Parzival is the greatest achievement of purely medieval literature; it is the crown of that vast body of poetry which began, we might say, with the crude Latin *Ruodlieb* by the unknown Bavarian poet of the eleventh century, spread over every land in Europe, and gradually disappeared before the Renaissance. No other epic of chivalry presents so varied a picture or is so rich in living creations, in men and women who, after the lapse of all but seven centuries, are still humanly interesting; none bears so distinctly the stamp of its creator's individuality as *Parzival;* above all, none can compare with it in the far-reaching spirituality of its ideas. *Parzival* is in many ways greater than the middle ages believed it to be; it suggests problems of which even its creator did not and could not know anything. What to Wolfram was a romance of human suffering and sympathy, becomes to the modern mind a tragedy of doubt and spiritual revolt.

Beside *Parzival*, Wolfram's other poetry is thrown unwarrantably into the shade. Yet, were *Parzival* lost, Wolfram would still take high rank on account of *Titurel* and *Willehalm;* for these poems, too, bear the unmistakable mark of his genius and personality. *Titurel* is the misleading title given to a number of fragments written in a strophic metre, obviously suggested by that of the popular epics; the main theme

Wolfram's *Titurel.*

[1] 456, 29 f.

of the fragments is the love-story of Schionatulander and Sigune, figures which appeared episodically in *Parzival*. Wolfram here devotes all the delicacy of his art to painting the awakening of love, a passion which plays but a subordinate part in *Parzival*. The beauty of the *Titurel* fragments lies in their pristine freshness; they might be compared with the coolness of the morning before the noonday glare of Gottfried's *Tristan*. It is difficult, however, to see how an epic could have been made out of *Titurel*, unless by introducing, as a later poet did, all manner of irrelevant episodes. The subject might lead us to infer that it had been written in the poet's youth, but as it stands, it belongs without question to a period subsequent to *Parzival*.

Willehalm, Wolfram's version of the French *Bataille d'Aleschans*, is a more important work. Markgraf Willehalm von Oransch has carried off and married Gyburg, the wife of a heathen king. With a large army of Saracens this king defeats the Christian army at Aleschans and lays siege to Willehalm's castle. Ultimately Willehalm escapes to the French king, who supplies him with a fresh army, and the Saracens are at last driven back. This epic affords the opportunity, missing in the case of *Parzival*, of comparing Wolfram's work with its French original, and such a comparison throws an interesting light upon his art. In general, Wolfram's conception of life is more humane, more chivalrous, than that of the French *Bataille d'Aleschans;* his Christian heroes are never fanatics for their faith; the Saracens are not spurned because they do not happen to have been baptised. Gyburg, the heroine of the poem, is the most finely delineated of Wolfram's women; strong in love, brave even to heroism, wise and tender, she inspires her husband Willehalm, more even than his faith, to heroic deeds. This poem shows Wolfram's attitude towards a stormier, more actual life than that depicted in *Parzival;* but, none the less, it is dominated by the same calm and conciliatory ideal of knightly courtesy as was the greater epic. The problem, which in *Erec* and *Iwein* ended in discord, is solved; love and knighthood are reconciled. *Willehalm*, which Wolfram left unfinished, was extended by Ulrich von dem Türlin, who, about 1270, provided the poem with nearly 10,000 verses of introduction. Another Ulrich, Ulrich von Türheim, supplied a continuation

Willehalm.

Ulrich von Türheim's *Rennewart*, ca. 1250.

of 36,400 verses in which the story of the young hero Rennewart is carried to a conclusion. The date of *Rennewart* is approximately the middle of the century.[1]

The greatness of Wolfram's poetry is to be sought less in its literary art than in the spirit which inspires it: it reflects on almost every page the untarnished nobility of the man. Nowhere in the history of literature is to be found a nature stronger, truer, more sincere than that of Wolfram von Eschenbach. No one saw deeper into the heart of the world, none was ever less blinded by its "falseness." He came nearer than any other medieval poet a solution of the problems and conflicts of human life; in Wolfram's calm, wise soul, the bitter dissension which had divided Europe since the rise of the spiritual power in the tenth century has no place. Thus the spiritual significance of his poetry is that it effected for the first time a reconciliation between "Frau Welt" and the Church; knighthood here reaches its highest ideal in the service of God.

[1] Cp. P. Piper, *Wolfram von Eschenbach*, 3 (D.N.L., 5, 1 [1890]), 318 ff.

COLL

CHAPTER VI.

GOTTFRIED VON STRASSBURG; THE DECAY OF THE COURT EPIC.

WHEN we turn from *Parzival* to the *Tristan* of Gottfried von Strassburg, it is not difficult to understand why Wolfram should have been branded by his brother-poet as an unclear thinker and a poor stylist: there is no greater contrast to be found in medieval literature than that between the poetic mysticism of *Parzival* and the lucidity and naturalism of *Tristan*. At the present time it is easy to realise that Wolfram possesses more than Gottfried of that *esprit allemand* which has always made for greatness in Northern literatures; but Wolfram's strong individuality made it impossible for him to adapt himself to the essentially French canons by which the German Court epic was dominated. Thus for the culmination of the Court epic in its narrower sense we must look rather to Gottfried: it was he who carried to its highest point of development the form of romance which had been introduced by Heinrich von Veldeke and perfected by Hartman von Aue. In comparison with *Parzival*, *Tristan* is less Germanic, but it is more in accordance with the literary ideal of chivalry.

Parzival and *Tristan*.

None of the greater German poets is so completely unknown to us as Gottfried of Strassburg. His life-history is, as far as facts are concerned, a blank, and his work throws little light upon his character and personality; even for the most important fact of all—namely, that the poet of *Tristan* actually was Gottfried von Strassburg—we are dependent upon second-hand evidence. We can infer, however, that Gottfried was what the age called a learned man, as he was versed both in Latin and French. He was also familiar with court-life, but he did not himself belong, like Hartman, Wolfram, and Walther, to the

Gottfried von Strassburg.

nobility; he is entitled "Meister," never "Herr" Gottfried by his contemporaries. As to the date of *Tristan*, there is a celebrated passage in the eighth book, where Gottfried breaks his narrative to give his opinions of the poets of his time, and from this passage it is possible to infer that the epic was written about the year 1210.[1]

Tristan's childhood.

Riwalin of Parmenia, Tristan's father, comes to the Court of King Marke of Kurnewal (Cornwall), where he wins the love of the king's sister Blanscheflur. She escapes secretly with him, and they are married in Parmenia. Shortly afterwards Riwalin falls in battle, and Blanscheflur dies, broken-hearted, at the birth of her child. The young hero whose entry into the world has been so tragic is adopted by Riwalin's faithful marshal Rual, and brought up as his own son. Tristan is not, like Parzival, an inexperienced simpleton who has to learn the lessons of life; he is from the first a prodigy, and at the age of fourteen is versed in the accomplishments of chivalry. Carried off by Norse merchants, he is landed on the coast of Kurnewal, and finds his way to King Marke's castle of Tintajoel (Tintagel), where he astonishes the Court by his attainments. Here, after a search of four years, his foster-father finds him, and the true story of his parentage is disclosed, not only to King Marke but to Tristan himself. King Marke adopts him as his heir, and a festival is held at which the young man goes through the ceremony of the "Schwertleite"—that is to say, is raised to the rank of a knight. Tristan goes back to Parmenia, takes vengeance upon his father's murderer, reconquers the country, and leaves it to Rual and his sons, he himself returning to his uncle. Meanwhile the tribute imposed upon King Marke's land by King Gurmun of Ireland and his brother-in-law Morold has become intolerable, but no one has the courage to face Morold in single combat, and this is the only hope of freeing Kurnewal from the Irish yoke. When Tristan arrives, he at once accepts Morold's challenge, and the battle is fought on a small island. Tristan returns victorious, but with a wound which, as the dying Morold has told him, none but his sister, the Irish queen, can heal. Morold's body is

Tristan and Morold.

[1] Editions of Gottfried's *Tristan* by R. Bechstein, 2 vols., 3rd ed., Leipzig, 1890-91, and W. Golther in D.N.L., 4, 2, 1 and 2 [1889]. The best translations into modern German are by H. Kurz, 3rd ed., Stuttgart, 1877, and W. Hertz, 2nd ed., Stuttgart, 1894.

brought back to Ireland, and the queen preserves a splinter of Tristan's sword which she finds in her brother's wound.

Under the name Tantris, and disguised as a Spielmann, Tristan comes to Develin (Dublin), the capital of Ireland, where he wins the interest of the young princess Isold for his art; in return for the instruction which he gives her in music and languages, her mother heals his wound. Then, on the plea that he has left a beloved wife at home, he returns to Kurnewal. The nobles of the land grow jealous of the favour which Tristan enjoys at King Marke's Court, and, in the hopes of preventing Tristan being Marke's successor, persuade the king to marry. The young Isold, of whose beauty Tristan has brought back favourable reports, is chosen as the king's bride, and Tristan returns to Ireland as an envoy. Isold, however, discovers in Tristan the Tantris of former days; she loves him, but her love changes suddenly to hatred when she discovers, by means of the sword-splinter which her mother has preserved, that Tristan slew her uncle. She is on the point of killing him with his own sword when the queen intervenes. A reconciliation is brought about by Isold's attendant, Brangæne. Tristan explains his mission, and Isold's father consents to her becoming Marke's bride. On the voyage to Kurnewal, Isold still regards her uncle's murderer with hatred, until an unhappy accident changes this hatred to the fiercest passion: she and Tristan drink, in mistake for wine, a love-potion which Isold's mother has intrusted to Brangæne in order to ensure a happy union between her daughter and King Marke:—

Tristan in Ireland.

Isold.

The "Minnetrank."

"Nu daz diu maget unde der man,
Isôt unde Tristan,
den tranc getrunken beide, sâ
was ouch der werlde unmuoze dâ
Minn', aller herzen lâgærîn,
und sleich z'ir beider herzen în.
ê sî's ie wurden gewar,
dô stiez si ir sigevanen dar
und zôch si beide in ir gewalt:
si wurden ein und einvalt,
die zwei und zwivalt wâren ê;
si zwei enwâren dô niht mê
widerwertic under in:
Isôte haz der was dô hin.
diu süenærinne Minne
diu hæte ir beider sinne

von hazze alsô gereinet,
mit liebe alsô vereinet,
daz ietweder dem andern was
durchlûter alse ein spiegelglas.
si hæten beide ein herze:
ir swære was sîn smerze,
sîn smerze was ir swære;
si wâren beide einbære
an liebe unde an leide
und hâlen sich doch beide,
und tete daz zwîvel unde scham:
si schamte sich, er tete alsam;
si zwîvelte an im, er an ir.
swie blint ir beider herzen gir
an einem willen wære,
in was doch beiden swære
der urhap unde der begin:
daz hal ir willen under in."[1]

The passion thus suddenly called into existence grows every day fiercer as the lovers approach their journey's end, sweeping away all Tristan's honour and Isold's sense of shame. At length the ship reaches Kurnewal, and the wedding of King Marke and Isold takes place shortly afterwards. With Brangæne's aid, Tristan and Isold's love is kept a secret from the king. Fearful of discovery, Isold even plots Brangæne's death, but repents before the deed is carried out.

One adventure now follows another in which the lovers deceive the king: his suspicions are awakened time after time, only to be allayed by Isold's cunning. She even undergoes the crucial medieval test of truth-telling: she takes an oath which, through a quibble, is not untrue, and corroborates it by carrying red-hot iron in her naked hand; whereupon the poet reflects upon the power of Christ to withstand deceit, in terms which later ages have pronounced blasphemous. It

[1] "Nun da die Jungfrau und der Mann, Isold und Tristan, beide den Trank getrunken, war sogleich auch der Welt Unruhe da, Minne, aller Herzen Nachstellerin, und schlich zu ihrer beider Herzen hinein. Ehe sie es [je] gewahr wurden, stiess sie ihre Siegesfahne dorthin und zog sie beide in ihre Gewalt: sie wurden eins und einig, die ehedem zwei und zweifach waren. Die zwei waren nun einander nicht mehr widerwärtig; Isolds Hass, der war dahin. Die Sühnerin Minne, die hatte ihrer beider Sinne von Hasse so gereinigt, mit Liebe so vereinet, dass jeder dem andern durch und durch klar war wie ein Spiegelglas. Sie hatten beide Ein Herz; ihr Kummer war sein Schmerz, sein Schmerz war ihr Kummer. Sie waren beide gleich an Freude und an Leid und verhehlten (es) sich doch beide, und das that (der) Zweifel und (die) Scham; sie schämte sich, er that das gleiche; sie zweifelte an ihm, er an ihr. Wie blind ihrer beider Herzensbegierde in Einem Willen (auch) war, (so) war ihnen beiden doch der Anfang und der Beginn schwer; das (dieser Umstand) verhehlte ihren Willen vor einander" (xvi. 11,711-11,744).

is, however, hardly allowable to judge Gottfried by modern criteria of religion and morality; he is not to be censured because, in those adventures in which the whole beauty of his art is displayed, he has no thought for the tragic retribution which a modern reader, from his less naïve standpoint, holds necessary. Gottfried has here doubtless followed his French model, and neither a French nor a German poet would at that time have regarded the "Minnetrank" as necessarily involving tragic consequences. Ultimately Tristan and Isold are banished, and the poet once more unfolds all his wealth of poetic imagery in describing their life in the "Minnegrotte." Another reconciliation and another discovery take place, and this time Tristan has to flee. At the Court of the Duke of Arundel, whose service he has entered in the hope of thereby forgetting Isold, he meets another Isold, "Isold of the White Hands," daughter of the duke. For her there awakens in Tristan's heart a new passion, with which it would seem as if his love for the "blond Isold" of Kurnewal were mingled. Here, however, Gottfried's poem breaks off, and we are obliged to turn to his continuators, Ulrich von Türheim, who wrote in Swabia about 1240, and Heinrich von Freiberg, whose more successful version was written about 1300,[1] for the conclusion of the poem. Tristan marries the white-handed Isold, but still loves the other and ultimately returns to Kurnewal. After a fresh series of love adventures, we find him once more with his wife: he is wounded by a poisoned spear. Only the blond Isold can bring healing, and he sends a messenger across the sea to fetch her. If she is on the returning ship, it is to bear a white sail: if not, a black one. The ship bringing her comes in sight, but Tristan's wife deceives him, telling him that the sail is black, not white. When the blond Isold arrives, she finds her lover already dead, and she, too, dies of grief. King Marke at last learns the secret of the fatal potion, and has the bodies brought back to Kurnewal; on Tristan's grave he plants a rose and on Isold's a rose, and, as they grow, they intertwine.

The "Minnegrotte."

Isold of the White Hands.

Ulrich von Türheim and Heinrich von Freiberg.

Tristan was Gottfried's last work, but it may be doubted if it was his only one. There is no trace of the unpractised hand in *Tristan*; from the first line onwards, it is the work of a poet

[1] Heinrich von Freiberg's continuation has been edited by R. Bechstein, Leipzig, 1877. Cp. D.N.L., 4, 3, 166 ff.

whose art was mature. On the other hand, we are not able to claim Gottfried's authorship for anything else but a couple of lyrics, and it is even uncertain if they are his. The sources of *Tristan* are wrapped almost as completely in mystery as those of *Parzival*. The saga makes the impression of being more primitive than the ordinary romance of chivalry; it has something of the grandiose simplicity of the early Germanic myths. It may possibly be of Keltic origin, but it is only loosely connected with the cycles of Arthurian romance. In any case, *Tristan* received the form in which we know it in France, and from France Gottfried borrowed his original. But here again we meet with difficulties. Crestien von Troyes wrote a *Tristan*, which might possibly—Crestien's poem is lost—have been Gottfried's source, were it not that the German poet expressly cites as his authority a certain Thomas von Britanje. This Thomas is not so mysterious a person as Wolfram's Kyot, for some fragments have been preserved of an old French *Tristan*, and in one of these a *jongleur* named Thomas is mentioned as the author. Unfortunately, however, the French fragments begin where Gottfried has left off, and a comparison of the French and German versions is hence impossible.

Sources of Gottfried's *Tristan*.

It is no easy matter, in the case of so impersonal a poet as Gottfried, to form a just estimate of his poetic talent: it is even open to question if Gottfried has done more than merely translate his original. The general composition of the poem, the simplicity of motive which carries us back to a period before the existence of chivalry, the fineness of characterisation, even the background to the events — for Gottfried assuredly never saw the sea, which is almost as immediately present in *Tristan* as in *Gudrun*—all this Gottfried probably found ready to his hand in the French original.

His style, however, is his own—it is a direct development of that of Hartman; but his resources were greater, and he reveals a finer sense for rhythm than did any of his predecessors. He is conscious of the monotony of the rhymed couplet, and occasionally breaks it with iambic strophes, which give lyric colouring to the poem. Of all the poets of the Court epic, Gottfried von Strassburg had the greatest mastery over rhyme and language. But, like all masters of language, he falls into mannerisms. He loves antitheses and repetitions; he is fond of playing upon words. The effect is pleasing

Gottfried's style.

in him, but it is the beginning of decay in Middle High German verse. Elements of degeneration, too, are to be noticed in Gottfried's fondness for allegory, a fondness which in the later Court epic assumes extraordinary dimensions.

Gottfried as a poet of love.

The real greatness of the German *Tristan* lies in its conception and description of love. In Gottfried's power of realising the most delicate manifestations of passion, in the convincing truth with which he paints its effects, he has no rival in medieval literature. And, in all probability, it is here that his deviations from the French original were greatest. In the story of Tristan's parents, which, unlike most introductions, is poetically on a level with the rest of the epic, we have a foretaste of the poet's ability to describe "Frau Minne's" might; and this foretaste helps us to appreciate the wide range and variety of his art in the great moments of Tristan and Isold's story. No other poet before the Renaissance celebrated love in such glowing tones; never was a great passion so magnificently described as in the scenes of the "Minnetrank" and the "Minnegrotte." One of the secrets of Gottfried's mastery as a love-poet is his unrelenting earnestness; indeed, the earnestness that lies over *Tristan* merges almost into melancholy. No gleam of humour relieves the tragedy of the story, no touch of frivolity: *Tristan* is the most serious of all the Court epics. We may possibly be doing Gottfried's lost model an injustice in giving the German poet credit for those elements in *Tristan* which entitle it to be regarded as great poetry; but the warmth and the heartfelt sincerity of the German epic are foreign to the French temperament as far, at least, as that temperament is expressed in French medieval literature. Gottfried's conception of love is essentially Germanic; it is the love of Romeo and Juliet, the love that inspires Goethe's lyrics and the poetry of German Romanticism.

The later Court epic.

The Court epic in its later development stands entirely under the influence of Hartman, Wolfram, and Gottfried, but it never again came within measurable distance of *Iwein*, of *Parzival*, or *Tristan;* the later romances are rarely more than tedious and uninspired imitations. It is thus impossible in a general history to discuss the epic poetry of this period with a completeness proportionate to its bulk, or to do it the justice it deserves as the staple imaginative food of a nation for almost

two hundred years. For many writers, to whom the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries looked up as poets of the first rank, a few words of mention must suffice.

The influence of Hartman.

Upon contemporaries of the three great poets, the influence of Hartman is the most noticeable: he was the easiest to imitate, and consequently the first to be imitated. A clerical poet of the Thurgau in Northern Switzerland, Ulrich von Zatzikhoven, wrote about 1195 a *Lanzelet*,[1] which is to some extent modelled on Hartman's *Erec*. The poem, however, has no great poetic merit, and combines the crudeness and rough popular tone of the epic before Hartman, with that extravagant delight in fairy lore which was one of the earliest signs of decay in the Arthurian romance.

Ulrich von Zatzikhoven.

Wirnt von Gravenberg.

Among the minor poets of the classical decade of Middle High German poetry, Wirnt von Gravenberg, a Bavarian nobleman, takes the first place. In his *Wigalois*,[2] written probably between 1202 and 1205, he describes the adventures of Gawein's son, Wigalois, the name being a German corruption of Guy or Guinglain le Galois. Wirnt's original, which he treated with a greater freedom and originality than his contemporaries allowed themselves, was the French epic *Li bel inconnu*, by Renauld de Beaujeu. The German romance is disfigured by the extravagance of its incidents and its didactic tone, features, however, which by no means detracted from its popularity; but Wirnt's imagination, notwithstanding its lack of discipline, is unquestionably the imagination of a poet. *Daniel von dem blühenden Thal*[3] is the title of an epic by "the Stricker"—a poet of whom more will presently be said—in which are woven together a series of elaborate adventures, mainly imitated from older German romances: in it, moreover, Gottfried von Strassburg's influence is to be traced for the first time.

"The Stricker's" *Daniel*.

Heinrich von dem Türlin.

The author of *Diu Krone* (*i.e.*, "the crown of all adventures"), a planless Arthurian romance of some 30,000 verses, drawn from many sources, was the Carinthian poet, Heinrich von dem Türlin, who wrote shortly after Hartman's death, but probably not later than 1220. The hero of this epic is

[1] Ed. K. A. Hahn, Frankfort, 1845; cp. P. Piper, *Die höfische Epik*, 2 (D.N.L., 4, 1, 2 [1893]), 163 ff.

[2] Ed. F. Pfeiffer, Leipzig, 1847; D.N.L., *l.c.*, 199 ff. Cp. F. Saran, in Paul and Braune's *Beiträge*, 21 (1896), 253 ff.

[3] Ed. G. Rosenhagen, Breslau, 1894; cp. D.N.L., 4, 1, 3 [1895], 86 ff.

Gawein (Gawan); it is Gawein, not Parzival, who asks the question in the castle of the Gral; and as soon as the words have crossed his lips, the castle and all its wonders disappear. The poet of *Diu Krone* shares the literary tastes of the Spielleute; he delights more in the rough humour of Kei, the comic figure at Arthur's table, than in the finer issues of the story. Besides writing *Diu Krone*, Heinrich von dem Türlin was also the author of *Der Mantel*, the hero of which, to judge from the fragment that has come down to us, was Lancelot.[1]

"The Pleier."

Among the poets of a later age who stood in Hartman's shadow, the chief is "the Pleier," a native of Salzburg or Styria, who between 1260 and 1290 wrote three epics of no marked individuality, *Garel von dem blühenden Thal*, of which the Stricker's *Daniel* was obviously the model, *Tandareis*, and *Meleranz*.[2] Konrad von Stoffel imitated *Iwein* in his *Gauriel von Muntabel* or "the Knight with the Goat."[3] Finally, mention must be made of *Wigamur*,[4] a tasteless medley of adventures by an unknown poet who was either himself a Spielmann or had, at least, learned his art from Spielleute.

Wigamur.

Wolfram's influence.

Der Jüngere Titurel, ca. 1270.

The influence of Wolfram von Eschenbach has left its mark on the so-called *Jüngere Titurel*,[5] which a Bavarian poet, Albrecht von Scharfenberg, who wrote about 1270, built upon the unfinished fragments of Wolfram's *Titurel*. The love-story which Wolfram had begun is in this lengthy epic extended into a poetic history of the Gral, from the time of Christ to "Prester John," who is identified with Parzival. In the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, *Der Jüngere Titurel* was not only believed to be by Wolfram von Eschenbach, but, still stranger, regarded as his greatest work. The inevitable comparison with *Parzival* is apt, however, to blind us to the merits of the poem. Albrecht imitates and accentuates his master's mannerisms of thought and style absurdly enough, in his efforts to attain an air of significance, but he has a keen sense for the romantic element in poetry: the description of the Temple of

[1] *Diu Krone*, ed. G. H. F. Scholl, Stuttgart, 1852; *Der Mantel*, ed. O. Warnatsch, Breslau, 1883. Cp. D.N.L., 4, 1, 2, 242 ff.

[2] The three poems have been edited respectively by M. Walz, Freiburg, 1892; by F. Khull, Graz, 1885; and by K. Bartsch, Stuttgart, 1861. Cp. D.N.L., 4, 1, 2, 302 ff.

[3] Ed. F. Khull, Graz, 1885; D.N.L., *l.c.*, 388 ff.

[4] D.N.L., *l.c.*, 560 ff. Cp. G. Sarrazin, *Wigamur* (*Quellen und Forschungen*, 35), Strassburg, 1879.

[5] Ed. K. A. Hahn, Quedlinburg, 1842; D.N.L., *l.c.*, 452 ff.

the Gral, for instance, is no unworthy example of the heights to which the medieval imagination could rise. To a later date belongs *Lohengrin* by an unnamed Bavarian poet: it relates an episode in the famous "Wartburgkrieg," of which something has to be said in a later chapter. Wolfram is here made to describe the adventures of Parzival's son in the wars of Heinrich I. against the heathens, and to tell how, as the Knight of the Swan, Lohengrin championed Elsam, daughter of a Duke of Brabant.[1]

Lohengrin.

The blending of history with Arthurian romance, which we meet with in *Lohengrin*, is one of the most significant changes that came over the Court epic in the second half of the thirteenth century: it marks the transition from epic to rhyme chronicle. Ulrich von Eschenbach, the author of one of the most popular Middle High German romances of Alexander the Great, the *Alexander*, written in the last quarter of the century, introduced historical elements into a Bohemian romance, *Wilhelm von Wenden* (ca. 1290).[2] The hero of Berthold von Holle's *Krane* (ca. 1255), again, is a Hungarian prince.[3] In the *Livländische Reimchronik* and the *Weltchronik* of Jans Enikel,[4] a native of Vienna—to mention only two of the numerous works of this class written at the close of the thirteenth and beginning of the fourteenth centuries—the transition from epic to chronicle is already accomplished.

Ulrich von Eschenbach.

Berthold von Holle.

Jans Enikel.

The literary movement of the later thirteenth century clearly favoured a closer touch with actual life than is to be found in the masterpieces of the Arthurian epic. The introduction of historical events and personages in the epic was one manifestation of this tendency; another was the fondness of the later poets for treating stories of peasant life, in the manner of the Court epic. In the earlier half of the thirteenth century we find a forerunner of this realism in the Spielmann who is known by the name of "Der Stricker." Although not perhaps an Austrian by birth, "the Stricker" wrote in

"The Stricker."

[1] Ed. H. Rückert, Quedlinburg, 1858; D.N.L., 4, 1, 3, 56 ff.

[2] Both poems have been edited by W. Toischer (Stuttg. Litt. Ver., 183), 1888, and Prag, 1876; D.N.L., 4, 1, 3, 40 ff.

[3] Ed. K. Bartsch, Nürnberg, 1858; Berthold is also the author of an epic, *Demantin*, ed. K. Bartsch (Stuttg. Litt. Ver., 123), 1875. Cp. D.N.L., *l.c.*, 1 ff.

[4] Ed. P. Strauch (for the *Monumenta germanica*), Hanover, 1891-1900; D.N.L., 4, 1, 3, 658 ff.

Austria. His chief importance is that, with his *Pfaffe Amis*, he gave higher literary life to a type of romance which is to German literature what the picaresque romance is to that of Spain. Amis, who is closely allied to Morolf, stands at the head of a long line of clever, witty rascals, the heroes of countless "Schwänke" and comic adventures: he is the Middle High German forerunner of Eulenspiegel. Besides being the author of *Pfaffe Amis*, "the Stricker" wrote an Arthurian romance which has already been mentioned, an epic, *Karl* — virtually a version of Konrad's *Rolandslied* — and a number of "Bîspel" or parables, which are akin to the didactic fables in favour in the sixteenth century.[1] *Der Pfaffe Amis.*

The conflict between the literary ideals of chivalry and the newly awakened realism is most marked in the poetry of Ulrich von Liechtenstein.[2] Born probably about 1200, Ulrich von Liechtenstein belonged to a noble Styrian family; late in life — in 1255 — he wrote his *Frauendienst*, in which, with a desire to be entertaining rather than strictly truthful, he described his own fantastic adventures as knight and lover. Reflected in the essentially unromantic temperament of a poet like Ulrich, the chivalry he describes becomes artificial and meaningless; *Frauendienst* leaves behind it an impression which might be compared with that produced by daylight on the scenery of a theatre. The numerous lyrics and "Büchlein" in the style of Hartman, which are embedded in this *Dichtung und Wahrheit* of the thirteenth century, are the most valuable part of the work. In the *Frauenbuch*, written a couple of years later, Ulrich returns to the same theme; but this time there is some bitterness in his retrospect. An epoch in German sŏcial history was clearly passing away. Ulrich von Liechtenstein, ca. 1200-76.

On the whole, the most pleasing example of the germinating realism in Middle High German poetry is the short peasant romance of *Meier Helmbreht*, by Wernher der Gartenære, a poet of Upper Bavaria.[3] If we except certain elements in the Wernher's *Meier Helmbreht*, ca. 1240.

[1] *Der Pfaffe Amis*, in H. Lambel, *Erzählungen und Schwänke*, 2nd ed., Leipzig, 1883, 1 ff.; *Karl* has been edited by K. Bartsch, Quedlinburg, 1857. Cp. D.N.L., 4, 1, 3, 86 ff., also 2, 2, 113 ff.

[2] Ed. K. Lachmann, Berlin, 1841; the *Frauendienst* has also been edited by R. Bechstein, 2nd ed., Leipzig, 1888; D.N.L., 4, 1, 3, 420 ff. Cp. R. Becker, *Wahrheit und Dichtung in Ulrichs von Liechtenstein Frauendienst*, Halle, 1888.

[3] Ed. H. Lambel, *l.c.*, 131 ff., and F. Keinz, 2nd ed., Leipzig, 1887; D.N.L., 4, 1, 2, 398 ff.

Latin *Ruodlieb* of the eleventh century, *Meier Helmbreht* is the earliest specimen of the peasant romance to be found in European literature. It is the tragic story of a peasant who, discontented with his station, enters the service of a robber-knight. After a year he returns to his family, but gives himself such airs that they at first do not recognise him. He persuades his sister to marry one of his freebooting companions, but the company is surprised by officers of the law, and nine are executed. Helmbreht himself escapes, but only with the loss of his sight, and of a hand and foot. His father turns him away from his door, and the peasants who had suffered at his hands hang him on a tree. *Meier Helmbreht*, which was written between 1234 and 1250, is not to be compared with the great Court epics. Its principal charm lies in the freshness and actuality of its descriptions; the details of everyday life have an interest for its author which contrasts strongly with the aristocratic indifference of the poets of the beginning of the century.

It was only to be expected that, as a more naturalistic conception of literature came into favour, the art of Gottfried von Strassburg should be better appreciated and more frequently imitated. As far back as 1220, Konrad Fleck, a Swiss poet, had shown himself a faithful disciple of Gottfried in *Flore und Blanschflur*,[1] in which one of the great love sagas of the middle ages is retold with no small poetic ability; and the two greatest poets of the later time—Rudolf von Ems and Konrad von Würzburg—stand completely in Gottfried's shadow.

Konrad Fleck.

Rudolf, the older of these two poets, takes his name from Ems, near Chur in Switzerland, where he was vassal (*dienstman*) to a Graf von Montfort. His poetic genius was by no means proportionate to the quantity of poetry which he left behind him: he belongs rather to the chroniclers than to the poets. He sat, it is true, at Gottfried's feet, but he had not talent enough to assimilate what he learned from Gottfried: thus the latter's influence upon his poetry is limited to external matters of style and form. Rudolf von Ems was one of the learned poets of Middle High German literature: in other words, he was able to seek themes for his poetry in

Rudolf von Ems.

[1] Ed. E. Sommer, Quedlinburg, 1846, and W. Golther in D.N.L., 4, 3 [1889], 233 ff.

Latin sources. The story of *Der gute Gerhard*, for instance, —the earliest and best of his works,—is taken from a Latin chronicle. The hero is a merchant of Cologne who undergoes various romantic adventures and temptations without losing the integrity of his character. *Barlaam und Josaphat*, again, is a version of an old Buddhistic legend, which found its way in a similar guise into most Western literatures: it tells how the wealthy and magnificent Prince Josaphat becomes a convert to the asceticism of the hermit Barlaam. This poem of Rudolf's seems to have been widely read, although a theological asceticism which recalls the literature of the previous century hangs heavy upon it. These two romances were probably written between 1225 and 1230.

Der gute Gerhard.

Barlaam und Josaphat.

In *Wilhelm von Orlens* Rudolf abandons the religious legend for the romance of chivalry. This is a poem of tedious length, describing the adventures of Wilhelm, in whom it is difficult to recognise the Norman Conqueror, and the Princess Amelie of England. Rudolf had more opportunities for displaying his learning in his two long chronicle romances—the *Geschichte Alexanders des Grossen* and the *Weltchronik*—neither of which he lived to finish. For both works he read widely in the monkish literature of the age. The *Weltchronik* follows the history of the world down only to the time of Solomon; but the poet is liberal with digressions which, however worthless from a poetic point of view, often throw an interesting light upon medieval ideas of history and geography. After Rudolf's death, which probably took place about 1254, the *Weltchronik* did not suffer from lack of continuators. Both in Rudolf's original version and in innumerable versions by other hands, it enjoyed great popularity, and was one of the chief sources from which following generations drew their knowledge of the Bible.[1]

Wilhelm von Orlens.

Welt-chronik.

A more genuine poet than Rudolf von Ems was Konrad von Würzburg, whose earliest poems were written not long after the former's death. Konrad is the greatest poet of the last generation of Middle High German writers, the only one who can in any way be compared with the master-poets of the first decade of the century. In all probability a native of

Konrad von Würzburg, died 1287.

[1] *Der gute Gerhard* has been edited by M. Haupt, Leipzig, 1840; *Barlaam und Josaphat* by F. Pfeiffer, Leipzig, 1843. Rudolf's other poems are either unpublished or not yet critically edited. Cp. D.N.L., 4, 1, 3, 543 ff.

Würzburg, he seems to have spent some time in Strassburg, and finally to have settled in Basle, where he died in 1287. Although he never came so completely under clerical influence as Rudolf von Ems, Konrad von Würzburg has also left a number of legends of a religious nature. To this class belong *Alexius*, *Silvester*, and *Pantaleon*[1]—poems which were written for patrons in Basle. In *Der Welt Lohn* (*Der werlte lôn*) he introduces Herr Wirnt von Gravenberg in person, and tells how this poet was converted from his worldly way of life by means of "Frau Welt," who appeared to him as a beautiful woman; when, however, she turned her back, he saw that she was a monster of loathsomeness. *Die goldene Schmiede* is a lyric romance in honour of the Virgin, in which the "Marienlyrik" of the century reappears as a fantastic and extravagant allegory. Konrad did not, however, produce his best work until he had entirely abandoned religious poetry. *Kaiser Otte mit dem Barte* is a vividly narrated historical anecdote, and the *Herzemære* one of the best-constructed of all the shorter Middle High German romances. It tells of a knight who, at his mistress's command, leaves her and crosses the sea to Jerusalem, where he dies of a broken heart. His last request is that his heart may be brought to the mistress to whom in life it belonged. The lady's husband obtains the heart, and has it cooked and served up to her. When she learns what she has eaten, she declares that after such noble food she will never eat again; and she, too, dies of a broken heart. It is in a poem such as this that Konrad has an opportunity of displaying what he learned from his master, and this influence is even still more apparent in the finest of all his shorter romances, *Engelhard*.[2] The fundamental motive of *Engelhard* is not, however, love but friendship; it is a version of the medieval saga of *Amicus and Amelius* which found its way in some form or other into all European literatures.

Legends.

Der Welt Lohn.

Die goldene Schmiede.

The *Herzemære.*

Engelhard.

Konrad's two longest poems, which unfortunately show the formlessness and lack of proportion of the decadent epic, are

[1] *Silvester* has been edited by W. Grimm, Göttingen, 1841; the other two poems by M. Haupt in his *Zeitschrift*, 3 (1845) and 6 (1848). Cp. D.N.L., 4, 1, 3, 267 ff.

[2] *Otte* and the *Herzemære* are edited in H. Lambel's *Erzählungen und Schwänke*, 2nd ed., Leipzig, 1883; *Der werlte lôn* by F. Roth, Frankfort, 1843; *Die goldene Schmiede* by W. Grimm, Berlin, 1840; and *Engelhart* by M. Haupt, 2nd ed., Leipzig, 1890. Cp. D.N.L., 4, 1, 3, 176 ff.

Partonopier und Meliur[1] and the *Trojanerkrieg*.[2] Meliur, in the first of these, is an invisible fairy whose love Partonopier enjoys; but he is not permitted to see her until three years have passed. Following evil counsel, he breaks this injunction, and brings down the wrath of the fairy upon his head. As a consequence of his misdeed, he is obliged to wander through the world and undergo innumerable adventures before he obtains a reconciliation with her. *Partonopier und Meliur* was originally a French romance which Konrad, himself unfamiliar with French, was obliged to have translated for him. In his hands it became an epic of some 19,000 verses. But this is little more than one-third the length of the *Trojanerkrieg*, which is the longest epic in Middle High German literature. The basis of the *Trojanerkrieg* is, naturally, Benoît's *Roman de Troie*, which had already been translated by Herbort von Fritzlar. Konrad, however, was far from being content with the materials Benoît afforded him. "Ich wil," he says—

Partonopier und Meliur.

Der Trojanerkrieg.

> "ich wil ein mære tihten,
> daz allen mæren ist ein her.
> als in daz wilde tobende mer
> vil manic wazzer diuzet,
> sus rinnet unde fliuzet
> vil mære in diz getihte grôz."[3]

In other words, this epic is a disorderly collection of all that the middle ages knew about or associated with the Trojan war. The poet died before his poem was finished, and some unknown hand, which, however, had little of Konrad's cunning, wrote the final 10,000 verses. On the whole, the *Trojanerkrieg* must be regarded as Konrad von Würzburg's *magnum opus*, and that not merely on account of its length: tedious, uninspired, as any one who tries to read it nowadays will find it, this epic unrolls a wide panorama of the life, the customs, and ideas of the thirteenth century. It admittedly contains only one drop of poetry to oceans of prose, it is formless as almost no other Court epic is formless, but it is the work of a

[1] Ed. K. Bartsch, Vienna, 1870; D.N.L., *l.c.*, 279 ff.

[2] Ed. A. von Keller (Stuttg. Litt. Ver., 44), 1858; notes edited by K. Bartsch in vol. 133 of the same series, Stuttgart, 1878. Cp. D.N.L., *l.c.*, 311 ff.

[3] "Ich will eine Märe dichten, die allen Mären ein Meister ist. Wie in das wilde, tobende Meer viel [manches] Wasser rauscht, so rinnen und fliessen viele Mären in dieses grosse Gedicht" (ll. 234-239).

poet who possessed both imagination and individuality. For the last time in the history of German literature we here find that love of clear, broad contrasts, that simple ethics which admits neither of doubting nor questioning, and that childish idealism, which give the medieval mind its characteristic stamp: here for the last time the courtly graces of chivalry are a dominant force in poetry.

The end of the Court epic.

And so, under the mild Indian summer represented by Konrad von Würzburg, a great literary period, one might almost say an entire literature, passes to its end. Heinrich von Freiberg, who completed Gottfried's *Tristan*, Heinrich von Neuenstadt,[1] who, about 1300, wrote a lengthy *Apollonius von Tyrus*, a story akin to the pleasing *Mai und Beaflor*[2] of a few decades earlier, Herrant von Wildonie,[3] and the unknown Swiss author of *Reinfried von Braunschweig*,[4] a romance of the age of Heinrich the Lion—these may be regarded as the last representatives of the Court epic.

[1] J. Strobl, *Heinrich von Neuenstadt*, Vienna, 1875; D.N.L., 4, 1, 3, 374 ff.
[2] Ed. F. Pfeiffer, Leipzig, 1848; D.N.L., 4, 1, 2, 369 ff.
[3] Cp. D.N.L., 4, 1, 3, 410 ff.
[4] Ed. K. Bartsch (Stuttg. Litt. Ver., 109), 1871; D.N.L., 4, 1, 3, 344 ff.

CHAPTER VII.

THE MINNESANG.

At Whitsuntide in the year 1184, Kaiser Friedrich Barbarossa held at Mainz the most imposing festival Germany had ever seen. The flower of German chivalry—princes, knights, and ladies—flocked in thousands to the Rhineland in response to the Emperor's invitation, and among the foreign guests every nation of Western Europe was represented. With a pomp and splendour and colour only possible in the age of chivalry, Barbarossa's two sons, Heinrich and Friedrich, went through the ceremony of the "Schwertleite,"—that is to say, were raised to the rank of knights. The Mainz festival is an outstanding event in German history, for from it may be said to date the nationalisation of chivalry in Germany: before this time only a French fashion affected by the German nobility, chivalry now became a German institution. And on literature also the festival at Mainz acted as a stimulus. By facilitating intercourse with France, it gave a powerful impetus to that poetry of knighthood which, as we have seen, formed the higher stratum in the literature of the thirteenth century. And no form of literature responded more quickly to this stimulus than the Court Lyric or Minnesang.

The German Minnesang[1] is based essentially upon a social convention; it gives literary expression to what the German poets called "Frauendienst," a more or less formal worship

[1] The two chief collections of the Minnesang are the Weingartner MS. in Stuttgart (*B*), edited by F. Pfeiffer and F. Fellner (Stuttg. Litt. Ver., 5), 1843, and the great Manessische or Heidelberg MS. (*C*). The latter, which is at present being edited by F. Pfaff (Heidelberg, 1898 ff.), is the most beautiful of all the old German MSS. Besides Lachmann and Haupt's *Des Minnesangs Frühling*, and F. Pfaff's *Der Minnesang des 12. bis 14. Jahrhunderts*, already quoted, a convenient selection of the Minnesang is K. Bartsch's *Deutsche Liederdichter des 12.-14. Jahrhunderts*, 4th ed., Berlin, 1901.

Minnesang and Minnedienst.

of womanhood. The theme of the Minnesingers' poetry is "minne," a word which expresses a much more comprehensive idea than the modern "Liebe"; to the knight of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries "minne" stood for an entire code of social conventions which regulated the relations of the courtly lover to his lady. There is thus, at the outset, a marked difference in the interpretation of the word "love" on the part of the Provençal Troubadours and the German Minnesingers. To the Romance poets, love was a purely personal affair, and illicit attachments were usually given the preference. The German mind, on the other hand, spiritualised the sentiment; the Minnesinger's love for his mistress widened into an all-embracing reverence for womanhood; "minne" was an ideal attachment, a chivalric devotion to a woman, closely akin to "triuwe," which, as we have seen, was the highest virtue which the German knight could lay at the feet of his liege lord. In other words, the Germanic poet took love more seriously than the light-hearted southern singer; it became a guiding force in his higher moral life. This spirit is expressed by the greatest of the Minnesingers in two lines—

> "Swer guotes wîbes minne hât,
> der schamt sich aller missetât,"[1]—

lines which form a parallel to Goethe's—

> "Willst du genau erfahren, was sich ziemt,
> So frage nur bei edlen Frauen an."

Thus, below the conventions of the Minnesang, lay a fund of noble and genuine lyric feeling. Absurd as the Minnedienst eventually became,[2] it was in its prime one of the main outlets for the spiritual aspiration of the middle ages. Moreover, to the difference between the Romance and Germanic conceptions of love is mainly due the fact that the German medieval lyric was the most national of all forms of Middle High German poetry. Romance influence notwithstanding, the German Minnesang remained always in the best sense German.

The earliest of the great Middle High German epic poets, Heinrich von Veldeke, was himself present at the Whitsuntide

[1] "Wer gutes Weibes Minne hat, der schämt sich jedes unrechten Thuns" (*Walther von der Vogelweide*, ed. Lachmann and Müllenhoff, 93).

[2] See, for example, Ulrich von Liechtenstein's *Frauendienst* (above, p. 109), and O. Lyon, *Minne- und Meistersang*, Leipzig, 1883, 53 ff.

festival in Mainz, and it is no accident that he should have been the pioneer of the new epoch in the lyric as well as in the epic. With Heinrich von Veldeke the Minnesang comes immediately under the influence of the French lyric. The poet of the *Eneit* reveals himself, in more than fifty lyric strophes which have come down to us, as a naïve, light-hearted singer, a characteristic Rhinelander, who delighted, like the less polished Austrian singers, in the coming of spring, in birds and flowers. But from France he learned a more varied repertory of melodies, and from France, too, came the new tones with which, here as well as in his epic, he sang the praises of Frau Minne:— Heinrich von Veldeke as lyric poet

> "Von minne kumet uns allez guot:
> diu minne machet reinen muot.
> waz solte ich sunder minne dan?"[1]

One of the representative German Minnesingers before Walther von der Vogelweide was Friedrich von Hausen (Hûsen),[2] a native of the Middle Rhine district; a number of other singers, whose lyrics are preserved in the great Lieder MSS. — notably Heinrich von Rugge, Ulrich von Gutenberg, and Bernger von Horheim—seem to have come under his influence. Friedrich von Hausen is an excellent type of the noble Minnesinger of his time. He stood in more or less intimate relations with Barbarossa and his sons, and to his example we possibly owe the song which appears in the Lieder MSS. under the name of the elder of these two sons, Kaiser Heinrich VI. He accompanied one or other of them to Italy and France, and in 1190 met his death in Asia Minor in battle with the Turks. The Provençal element is strong in Friedrich's poetry; but in addition to Provençal graces and that characteristically Provençal fondness for dallying with a word, as seen in the above-quoted lines from Heinrich von Veldeke, Friedrich von Hausen speaks a plain, straightforward language, which brings the reader into touch with the man. And yet, of all his checkered life, it may be said that only one motive has passed over into his songs—the yearning of the wanderer for his beloved at home. The Friedrich von Hausen

[1] "Von Minne kommt uns alles Gute; die Minne macht reines Gemüt. Was sollte ich ohne Minne thun?" Heinrich von Veldeke's lyrics will be found in *Minnesangs Frühling*, 56 ff. Cp. D.N.L., 4, 1, 1 [1892], 65 ff.

[2] *Minnesangs Frühling*, 42 ff.; D.N.L., 8, 1, 17 ff.

following are the opening lines of one of his finest songs, written in 1189, before his departure upon that crusade from which he did not return :—

"Mîn herze und mîn lîp diu wellent scheiden,
diu mit ein ander varnt nu mange zît.
der lîp wil gerne vehten an die heiden:
sô hât iedoch das herze erwelt ein wîp
vor al der werlt."[1]

Albrecht von Johannsdorf.

In Bavaria, Albrecht von Johannsdorf, who, like Friedrich von Hausen, followed Barbarossa on the crusade of 1189, struck a more primitive, Germanic note than his brother-poet of the Rhineland, while in the extreme south-east, near Neuchâtel in Switzerland, Graf Rudolf von Fenis sang love-songs which are all but directly translated from the Provençal.[2]

Rudolf von Fenis.

Heinrich von Morungen.

A greater, if less immediately influential, poet than Friedrich von Hausen was the Thuringian, Heinrich von Morungen, who spent the last part of his life in Leipzig. The themes of his poetry are, it is true, not more varied than Friedrich's, and the influence of the Troubadours is quite as strong, but he has a wider range of expression and more originality. Heinrich von Morungen's verses have a strong individual stamp; his language and similes—often strangely modern—are occasionally lit up by a humour that reminds us of Wolfram von Eschenbach. As a specimen of his lyric, a strophe may be quoted from the "Tagelied" in which two lovers alternately express their affection, each verse closing with the same refrain :—

"Owê, sol aber mir iemer mê
geliuhten dur die naht
noch wîzer danne ein snê
ir lîp vil wol geslaht?
der trouc diu ougen mîn.
ich wânde, ez solde sîn
des liehten mânen schîn.
dô tagete ez."[3]

It was, however, neither Heinrich von Morungen nor Fried-

[1] "Mein Herz und mein Leib, die wollen scheiden, die mit einander fahren lange Zeit. Der Leib will gern mit den Heiden kämpfen; es hat jedoch das Herz ein Weib erwählt vor aller Welt" (*Minnesangs Frühling*, 47).

[2] *Minnesangs Frühling*, 80 ff. Cp. also K. Bartsch, *Die Schweizer Minnesänger*, Frauenfeld, 1886, 1 ff.

[3] "O weh! Soll mir je wieder [mehr] leuchten durch die Nacht, noch weisser als [ein] Schnee, ihr Leib so schön gestaltet? Der betrog die Augen mein. Ich wähnte, es wäre des lichten Mondes Schein. Da tagte es" (*Minnesangs Frühling*, 143).

rich von Hausen, but a less gifted singer, who took the leading position among the German Minnesingers before Walther von der Vogelweide—namely, Reinmar von Hagenau.[1] By birth an Alsatian, Reinmar seems, early in life, to have found a home at the Viennese Court; his lyrics show all the characteristics of the Austrian Minnesang, and the Provençal elements are more Germanised than in the poetry of the Rhenish singers. At the same time, Reinmar's lyric was essentially a Court lyric; if it avoided the formalities of the Troubadour poetry, it fell into others; the artificiality of the life in which the poet moved left its mark upon all his songs. Of the early Minnesingers, he is the most unrelievedly elegiac; his one theme is disappointed, unrequited affection. Love he only saw, as he himself tells us, "in bleicher varwe," and this "pale hue" gives his poetry a monotony. Thus although, after Walther, Reinmar has left the largest quantity of lyric poetry behind him, it does not leave an impression upon us proportionate to its mass. But he possesses a special claim upon our interest from the fact that under him Walther von der Vogelweide learnt his art, and when Reinmar died about 1210, Walther sang his praises in a noble panegyric.

Reinmar von Hagenau, ca. 1160-1210.

Only one other of the poets of the "Minnesang's Springtime" calls for notice here, Hartman von Aue. The same "crystalline" poetry is to be found in Hartman's songs as in his epics, and while the personal note is naturally clearer and fuller, there is the same striving to reconcile the contradictions of life as is to be found in his longer, more objective poems. Hartman's elegy on the death of his liege lord is the most heartfelt expression of sorrow in the early Minnesang:—

Hartman von Aue.

"Sît mich der tôt beroubet hât
des herren mîn,
swie nû diu werlt nâch im gestât,
daz lâze ich sîn.
der fröide mîn den besten teil
hât er dâ hin,
und schüefe ich nû der sêle heil,
daz wære ein sin."[2]

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[1] *Minnesangs Frühling*, 150 ff.; D.N.L., 8, 1, 63 ff. Cp. K. Burdach, *Reinmar der alte und Walther von der Vogelweide*, Leipzig, 1880.

[2] "Seit mich der Tod des Herren mein beraubt hat, wie nun die Welt nach ihm bestehen mag, das lasse ich sein (*i.e.*, darum kümmere ich micht nicht). Der Freude mein den besten Teil hat er dahin (*i.e.*, der beste Teil meiner Freude ist mit ihm verloren gegangen); besorgte ich nun der Seele Heil, das wäre vernünftig" (*Minnesangs Frühling*, 210).

This is altogether a higher, manlier type of elegy than Reinmar's had been; there breathes from Hartman's religious verse a pious trust in God, which is not common in the lyric of the early thirteenth century.

Walther von der Vogelweide, ca. 1170-1228.

The "spring-time" of the Minnesang passes into summer with the appearance of the greatest lyric poet of the middle ages, Walther von der Vogelweide.[1] Data for Walther's life are as rare as for the life of any other of the Middle High German poets, but the fact that much of his verse is political —that is to say, stands in relation to the historical events of the time—furnishes certain clues. The year and locality of Walther's birth are alike unknown. Beyond the name "Vogelweide," which was probably the title of some modest castle, we have no facts which might help us to identify his birthplace or home. For a time, the claims of the Southern Tyrol were regarded as strongest, but, in the light of recent investigations, several other places would seem to have an equal claim to this distinction. One thing alone is certain: Walther was a South German; he spoke and wrote the Bavarian dialect—that is, the dialect of Bavaria and Austria. Born about the year 1170, he was of noble family, as his title "Herr" implies; but he was poor—so poor that he was obliged to make a profession of his art.

Walther in Vienna.

At an early age Walther von der Vogelweide came to Vienna, to the Court of Duke Leopold V., and here his talents attracted the attention of Reinmar von Hagenau, who was some ten years his senior; the gentle, almost effeminate melancholy of Reinmar's Minnesang finds an echo in the young poet's earlier lyrics. Soon, however, a fresher, more youthful exuberance makes its appearance, and Walther's lyrics become careless and light-hearted. A number of poems from this first period have even been grouped together as referring to a serious love episode in Walther's life. There is, it is true, a personal note in these songs, but the poet's feelings are still half-hidden by the phrases of the "Minnedienst." His love would seem to have met with response, but secrecy and self-denial were necessary, if he were not to lose his mistress.

[1] Ed. by K. Lachmann and K. Müllenhoff, 6th ed., Berlin, 1891; by W. Wilmanns, 2nd ed., Halle, 1883; by F. Pfeiffer, 6th ed. (by K. Bartsch), Leipzig, 1880; and in D.N.L., by F. Pfaff (8, 2 [1895]). Cp. W. Wilmanns, *Leben und Dichten Walthers von der Vogelweide*, Bonn, 1882; A. E. Schönbach, *Walther von der Vogelweide* (*Führende Geister*, 1), 2nd ed., Dresden, 1895; and K. Burdach, *Walther von der Vogelweide*, 1, Leipzig, 1900.

To this cycle of songs belong probably the beautiful strophes which open :—

"Der rîfe tet den kleinen vogelen wê,
daz sie niht ensungen.
nû hôrt ichs aber wünneclîch als ê,
nu ist diu heide entsprungen.
dâ sach ich bluomen strîten wider den klê,
weder ir lenger wære.
mîner frouwen seite ich disiu mære." [1]

But Walther's love—if this personal interpretation of his lyrics is justified—ended tragically. A doubt arose as to whether his lady really loved him ; then strangers came between them, and at last the poor singer, with the *unsælikeit* in his heart, turned his back upon Vienna and wandered out into the world. This was in 1198.

Walther as "fahrender Sänger," 1198-ca. 1220.

For the next ten or twelve years Walther was a "fahrender Sänger," wandering from castle to castle, and dependent upon the generosity of ever-changing patrons. His repertory was made up not only of his own songs, to which he composed the melodies himself, but also of the songs of others, perhaps even of the popular romances of the "Heldensage." Thus he became a Spielmann, but being of noble birth and a Minnesinger, he was a more honoured guest than the ordinary singer of this class. He was often entertained for weeks and months at a time in some friendly castle, and often, too, during these long periods, a love adventure would spring up between the singer and some lady of high degree. In the songs which belong to this, the second period of Walther's life, he is a master of the courtly Minnesang. It is not known when or where these songs were composed, nor in whose honour they were sung, but doubtless many a personal experience is reflected in them. We hear, for instance, in one of these :—

"Swâ ein edeliu schœne frouwe reine,
wol gekleidet unde wol gebunden,
dur kurzewîle zuo vil liuten gât,
hovelîchen hôhgemuot, niht eine,
umbe sehende ein wênic under stunden
alsam der sunne gegen den sternen stât." [2]

---

[1] "Der Reif that den kleinen Vögeln weh, so dass sie nicht sangen. Nun hörte ich sie wieder lieblich wie früher ; nun steht die Haide im frischen Grün. Da sah ich Blumen streiten gegen den Klee, wer von ihnen beiden länger wäre. Meiner Dame sagte ich diese Märe" (ed. Lachmann, 114).

[2] "Wie eine edle, schöne, reine Frau, wohl gekleidet und wohl gebunden (*i.e.*, in festlicher Kleidung und mit schön aufgebundenem Haar) zur Kurzweil

An event fraught with tragic consequences for the Holy Roman empire happened in the autumn of 1197. Kaiser Heinrich VI., Barbarossa's son, whose strong hand had terrorised his composite empire into subjection, died unexpectedly at Messina, and for a time the wildest confusion seemed imminent. In the north two rivals came forward for the vacant throne—Philipp, Duke of Swabia, and Graf Otto of Poitou; while in the south the new Pope, Innocent III., showed that he was capable of a wider political activity than the affairs of Italy afforded him. The empire was on the brink of civil war. It was at this point that Walther von der Vogelweide began to employ his art in the interests of politics: his earliest political "Sprüche" were composed on behalf of the Duke of Swabia.

His political poetry.

Walther's political poetry is unduly overshadowed by his unpolitical lyric; for he is even greater as a political poet than as a Minnesinger in the strict sense of that word. He was not the first German poet to draw political events into the sphere of poetry—for that we should have to go back to the unknown poet of *De Heinrico*—but he was the first of the Minnesingers to write political verse. This side of Walther's work is obviously a direct development of that "Spruch" poetry which, as has already been pointed out, was one of the most elementary forms of the Spielmann's lyric. But, just as the national epic of the *Nibelungenlied* sprang from the union of the indigenous Spielmann's poetry with the art of the more polished singers of the Arthurian epic, so in Walther's hands the patriotic German "Lied" arose from the fusion of the old Germanic "Spruch" poetry with the art of the Minnesang. Walther von der Vogelweide may thus be regarded as the founder of that national and patriotic song in which the German literature of later centuries is so rich.

Walther's political "Sprüche" follow, sometimes despondently, but more often in a tone of solemn warning, the wavering fortunes of the Swabian pretender, who ultimately (1204), in spite of the Pope, gained the upper hand in the German empire. Four years later, however, another heavy blow fell upon the nation: Philipp was murdered by Otto of

zu vielen Leuten (*i.e.*, in eine grosse Gesellschaft) geht, hofgemäss und in freudiger Stimmung, nicht allein, (sich) umsehend ein wenig von Zeit zu Zeit, gleichwie die Sonne gegenüber den Sternen steht" (ed. Lachmann, 46).

Wittelsbach. How this catastrophe affected Walther is not known, for he ceased to write of Philipp as soon as the latter's prosperity once set in. Probably the oldest of his "Sprüche" is the famous one which opens with the lines—

"Ich saz ûf eime steine,
und dahte bein mit beine;
dar ûf sast' ich den ellenbogen;
ich hete in mîne hant gesmogen
daz kinne und ein mîn wange,"[1]—

lines which were obviously in the minds of the illustrators of the two great "Lieder" MSS., for both depict the poet in the attitude he describes. In another Spruch, Walther makes a stirring appeal to his nation, which closes with the words—

"Sô wê dir, tiuschiu zunge,
wie stêt dîn ordenunge,
daz nû diu mucke ir künec hât,
und daz dîn êre alsô zergât!
bekêrâ dich, bekêre!
die cirkel sint ze hêre,
die armen künege dringent dich."[2]

But the best idea of the poetic heights to which Walther's political lyric could rise is to be obtained from the jubilant patriotic song which he wrote, probably in Vienna, about 1203. The following are two of the five strophes:—

"Ich hân lande vil gesehen
unde nam der besten gerne war:
übel müeze mir geschehen,
künde ich ie mîn herze bringen dar,
daz im wol gevallen
wolde fremeder site.
nû was hulfe mich, ob ich unrehte strite?
tiuschiu zuht gât vor in allen.

Von der Elbe unz an den Rîn
und her wider unz an der Ungerlant
sô mugen wol die besten sîn,
die ich in der werlte hân erkant.

---

[1] "Ich sass auf einem Steine und deckte Bein mit Beine; darauf setzte ich den Ellbogen; ich hatte in meine Hand geschmiegt das Kinn und eine meiner Wangen" (ed. Lachmann, 8).

[2] "So weh dir, deutsche Zunge (*i.e.*, deutsches Volk), wie steht deine Ordnung, dass [nun] die Mücke ihren König hat, und dass deine Ehre so zergeht! O kehre dich um, kehre um! Die Zirkel (*i.e.*, Fürstenkronen) sind zu stolz, die armen Könige (*i.e.*, die Bewerber um den deutschen Thron) bedrängen dich" (*l.c.*, 9).

kan ich rehte schouwen
guot gelâz und lîp,
sam mir got, sô swüere ich wol daz hie diu wîp
bezzer sint danne ander frouwen."[1]

In Thuringia.

In his wanderings Walther was frequently a guest at the hospitable Court of the Landgraf of Thuringia; here, too, it will be remembered, he came into personal touch with Wolfram von Eschenbach, who was not without influence upon Walther's poetic style. In 1212, when Otto IV., the Guelf Emperor who succeeded the murdered Philipp, returned from Italy under the ban of the Pope, Walther again became a political singer. The action of the Pope, to whom Walther maintained the bitterest antagonism, was alone sufficient to make the poet an active partisan of the new Emperor. Walther remained faithful to Otto's cause as long as he could, although he received but scant reward or even thanks for his pains. When, however, the empire reverted once more to the dynasty of the Staufens, and the young Friedrich II. assumed the reins of government, Walther found in him a worthier as well as a more grateful patron. Friedrich's generosity enabled the poet to pass his last days free from want. In 1227 the inevitable rupture between Friedrich and the Pope took place, and Walther once more took up his pen to do battle against Rome. He begged the Emperor to undertake the crusade which the Pope had forbidden, and two songs, which are among the last he wrote, might suggest the inference that he had himself taken part in Friedrich's crusade of 1228. This, however, is improbable. From 1228 on, all traces of Walther's life are lost, but it is not likely that he lived to greet the Emperor on his return from the Holy Land. According to tradition, he passed his last years in Würzburg, and lies buried there.

Through all these years, the political events of which are thus fitfully reflected in Walther's Spruch poetry, the poet's

[1] "Ich habe Länder viel gesehen und die besten gern beobachtet; übel müsse mir geschehen, könnte ich je mein Herz dazu bringen, dass ihm fremde Sitten wohl gefallen sollten. Nun was hülfe es mir, wenn ich unrecht stritte (*i.e.*, eine falsche Behauptung verföchte)? Deutsche Zucht geht ihnen allen vor. Von der Elbe bis zum Rhein und wieder zurück zum Ungarland mögen wohl die besten sein, die ich in der Welt kennen gelernt habe. Kann ich recht schauen (*i.e.*, verstehe ich mich auf) gutes Benehmen und Sein, möchte ich wohl schwören, so (wahr) mir Gott (helfe), dass hier die Weiber besser sind, als anderswo die Frauen" (ed. Lachmann, 56 f.)

own life seems to have been a happy one. To this period belong the ripest and most beautiful of his love-songs. In these poems Walther has freed himself from the shackles of the Court Minnesang; the Provençal conventions of the "Minnedienst" have disappeared. With verses like—

"Mich dûhte daz mir nie
lieber wurde, danne mir ze muote was.
die bluomen vielen ie
von dem boume bî uns nider an daz gras.
seht, dô muost' ich von fröiden lachen.
do ich sô wunneclîche
was in troume rîche,
dô taget ez und muos ich wachen,"[1]—

or with the well-known *Under der linden*, the pearl of Walther's lyric, he has won for himself a place among the greatest lyric poets in the literature of the world:—

"Under der linden
an der heide,
dâ unser zweier bette was,
dâ mugent ir vinden
schône beide
gebrochen bluomen unde gras.
vor dem walde in einem tal,
tandaradei!
schône sanc diu nahtegal.

Ich kam gegangen
zuo der ouwe:
dô was mîn friedel komen ê.
dâ wart ich enpfangen,
hêre frouwe!
daz ich bin sælic iemer mê.
kuste er mich? wol tûsentstunt:
tandaradei!
seht, wie rôt mir ist der munt."[2]

But besides love lyrics and political "Sprüche," Walther also

[1] "Mich däuchte, dass ich nie in freudigerer Stimmung war, als mir (damals) zu Mute war; die Blumen fielen fortwährend von dem Baume bei uns nieder auf das Gras. Seht, da musste ich aus Freude lachen, da ich so wonniglich war, im Traume reich; da tagt es und ich muss erwachen" (ed. Lachmann, 75).

[2] "Unter der Linde auf der Haide, wo unser beider Bett war, da könnt ihr finden schön gebrochen sowohl Blumen wie Gras. Vor dem Wald in einem Thal, tandaradei! Schön sang die Nachtigall. Ich kam gegangen zu der Aue, dahin war mein Liebster schon gekommen. Da ward ich empfangen, hohe Frau! dass ich für immer [mehr] selig bin. Küsste er mich? Wohl tausend mal; tandaradei! Seht, wie rot ist mir der Mund" (ed. Lachmann, 39).

The "Leich."

wrote a "Leich" of greater length, which reflects the simple piety of medieval Christianity, and an elegiac retrospect upon his own life, the deepest and most spiritual of all his poems. The latter opens with the noble lines :—

"Owê war sint verswunden alliu mîniu jâr!
ist mir mîn leben getroumet oder ist ez wâr?
daz ich ie wânde daz iht wære, was daz iht?
dar nâch hân ich geslâfen und enweiz es niht.
nû bin ich erwachet, und ist mir unbekant
daz mir hie vor was kündic als mîn ander hant.
liut unde lant, dâ ich von kinde bin erzogen,
die sint mir fremde worden, reht' als ez sî gelogen."[1]

Walther's position as a lyric poet.

Walther gave the note to the "flock of nightingales" of the German Minnesang as no other poet of his time; he is the master to whom all look up. It is thus important to understand wherein his greatness consisted. As a Minnesinger in the strict sense of that word—that is to say, as a Minnesinger on the model of the Provençal poets—he occupies by no means an isolated position among his contemporaries; it is, indeed, open to question if in this respect he may be placed much above Heinrich von Morungen; and there are notes in Wolfram von Eschenbach's handful of lyric poetry which lay beyond Walther's reach. Again, as a singer of rural delights and uncourtly sentiments, there was among his successors one poet, at least, who was not unworthy to stand beside him. But Walther was something more than a great singer in one particular form of the lyric: he was great in all; none could compare with him in the breadth of his poetic range; none has left so considerable a body of lyric poetry. He began, as we have seen, by gathering up the threads of the German Minnesang, as it existed before him; but he mastered the half-Provençal art of his predecessors only to destroy it. Like Klopstock and Goethe nearly six centuries later, he nationalised the lyric: in place of an aristocratic art, imitating foreign models, the Minnesang became in his hands an expression for the lyric aspiration of the German people.

[1] "O weh, wohin sind verschwunden alle meine Jahre! Ist mir mein Leben geträumt, oder ist es wahr? Das (von dem) ich je glaubte, dass es etwas wäre, war das (wirklich) etwas? Danach habe ich geschlafen und weiss es nicht. Nun bin ich erwacht, und (es) ist mir unbekannt, was mir zuvor kund war wie meine andere Hand (*i.e.*, wie der einen Hand die andere). Leute und Land, wo ich von Kind auf erzogen bin, die sind mir fremd geworden, gerade als wären sie erlogen" (ed. Lachmann, 124).

Walther's influence upon both the Minnesang and the later Meistergesang was far-reaching; until the Renaissance began to make itself felt in Germany, no singer was more warmly appreciated than he. It was Hugo von Trimberg who, at the beginning of the fourteenth century, wrote the often-quoted lines—

> "Her Walther von der Vogelweide,
> wer des vergæsse, der tæt' mir leide."[1]

Even in modern times, Walther von der Vogelweide still enjoys something of his old prestige; of all medieval poets, none possesses so real an interest for the modern reader as he. Not only is he great enough as a lyric poet to rise above the conditions imposed upon him by his time, but his best lyrics are in such intimate touch with nature, they have broken so completely with all purely literary traditions, that he speaks to the modern world almost as a contemporary. None of the great singers of the middle ages or the Renaissance—neither Petrarch nor Ronsard—appeals to us to-day as does Walther von der Vogelweide.

Wolfram von Eschenbach.

Among his contemporaries there is only one who was in the fullest sense his peer, the Bavarian, Wolfram von Eschenbach. Wolfram's spacious genius, however, was cramped by the narrow confines of the Minnesang; he has left only eight songs, of which most are in the form of "Tagelieder." To him life was not so simple as to the majority of his fellow-singers and his songs are less naïve, but they reveal an imaginative depth and dramatic force—as when the watcher on the tower proclaims to the sleeping lovers the coming of the sun in the words—

> "Sîne klâwen durh die wolken sint geslagen,
> er stîget ûf mit grôzer kraft"[2]—

which was new to the German lyric.

Walther's contemporaries.

Walther von der Vogelweide left no school behind him in the ordinary acceptance of that word, but the German Minnesang which came after him is deep in his debt. Among his contemporaries, Ulrich von Singenberg, "der Truhsæze (Truchsess)

[1] "Wer dessen vergässe, der thäte mir leid" (*Der Renner*, 1218 f.)

[2] "Seine Klauen durch die Wolken sind geschlagen; er steigt auf mit grosser Kraft" (K. Bartsch, *Deutsche Liederdichter*, 3rd ed., 98).

von Sant Gallen," seems to have come into more or less intimate personal touch with him, and his verse[1] shows a close imitation of Walther's style. The Tyrolese nobleman, Leuthold von Savene (Säben), again, was a more original genius; he followed, but by no means slavishly, in his master's footsteps as a poet of nature.[2] In general, the German lyric after Walther falls into two clearly marked groups: on the one hand, the conservative, aristocratic Court Minnesang; on the other, the freer, more untrammelled lyric of nature, songs inspired by the life of the people. While Walther stands at the head of both these lines of development, the noble-born singers who remained faithful to the Minnesang, like the Swabian, Hiltbold von Schwangau,[3] preferred to take as their model Heinrich von Morungen.

The future of the German lyric did not, however, lie in the hands of the aristocratic singers of courtly love: not Walther the Minnesinger, but Walther the master of the national lyric, the Walther who had raised the songs of the people to a great art, was the master from whom the next generation learned its most profitable lesson. The greatest poet among the *epigoni* of the German Minnesang, the Bavarian nobleman Neidhart von Reuenthal (Riuwental), was not so much a Court singer in the strict sense of the word as a master in the art of popular song. With Neidhart, who was born probably about 1180 and lived till the middle of the next century, begins a new development of the lyric, a development of special importance for the subsequent history of the "Volkslied." Neidhart is the master of the "höfische Dorfpoesie"—that is to say, "village poetry under court influence," or, more shortly, of the peasant lyric. He will have nothing to do with noble ladies: he goes out among the peasants, joins in their dance under the village linden, or, if it be winter, in the great "Bauernstube." With a naïve, often childish pride, he describes his various conquests of village beauties. Here, for instance, is a conversation between mother and daughter in one of Neidhart's earlier poems. May has come and filled the woods with foliage, and the girl longs to join the dancers, but her mother refuses to allow her. She begs to be allowed to go:—

Neidhart von Reuenthal, ca. 1180-1250.

[1] K. Bartsch, *l.c.*, 129 ff.; D.N.L., 8, 1, 121 ff.
[2] K. Bartsch, *l.c.*, 126 ff.; D.N.L., *l.c.*, 118 ff.
[3] K. Bartsch, *l.c.*, 68 ff.; D.N.L., *l.c.*, 81 ff.

"Den ich iu wil nennen,
den muget ir wol erkennen.
ze dem sô wil ich gâhen.
er ist genant von Riuwental : den wil ich umbevâhen.

Ez gruonet an den esten
daz alles möhten bresten
die boume zuo der erden.
nû wizzet, liebiu muoter mîn, ich volge dem knaben werden.

Liebiu muoter hêre,
nâch mir sô klaget er sêre.
sol ich im des niht danken?
er spricht daz ich diu schœnest sî von Beiern unz in Vranken."[1]

This is the form of the majority of these songs. They usually open with a picture of the season; if it be spring, the poet describes the woods or the meadows in their fresh beauty, or the music of the birds:—

"Nu ist vil gar zergangen
der winder kalt,
mit loube wol bevangen
der grüene walt.
wunneclîch,
in süezer stimme lobelîch,
vrô singent aber die vogele, lobent den meien.
sam tuo wir den reien."[2]

Then follows a short romance or love adventure, graphically narrated in a sprightly dance measure. The winter songs are more serious. The dances in the "Bauernhof" do not always pass off so merrily as those under the linden; the rough peasants, whom Neidhart is always ready to satirise, dispute with him the possession of the village beauty, and the dance ends in blows. While in all this a healthy and pleasing revolt against the artificial formality of the Court poetry is to be recognised, there is, at the same time, an element of degeneration in Neidhart's lyric. Walther von der

[1] "Der, den ich euch nennen will, den könnt ihr erkennen. Zu dem will ich [also] eilen; er ist genannt von Riuwental; den will ich umfangen. Es grünt an den Ästen, dass alle die Bäume davon zur Erde niederbrechen könnten. Nun wisset, liebe Mutter mein, ich folge dem teueren Jüngling. Liebe, hohe Mutter, nach mir klagt er so sehr. Soll ich ihm nicht dafür danken? Er sagt, dass ich die schönste sei von Baiern bis nach Franken" (*Die Lieder Neidharts von Reuenthal*, ed. F. Keinz, Leipzig, 1889, 18). Cp. K. Bartsch, *l.c.*, 103 ff.

[2] "Nun ist gänzlich vergangen der Winter kalt, mit Laub wohl bedeckt der grüne Wald. Lieblich, mit süsser Stimme feierlich, froh singen wiederum die Vögel, loben den Mai. Ebenso tanzen (*lit.*, thun) wir den Reigen" (*l.c.*, 45).

Vogelweide, who did not look upon it with favour, shows a delicacy in his songs of "niederer Minne" which is not to be found here. The fabric of Neidhart's poetry is a little coarse, and, charming as are his vignettes of summer and winter, the imagery he uses is not original. Thus Neidhart von Reuenthal does not occupy a place in the front rank of the Minnesingers; he is not even to be compared with the singers of the early Minnesang, such as Heinrich von Morungen or Reinmar von Hagenau; but he was the most gifted lyric poet of his time, and his poetry left its mark upon the German Volkslied for at least two centuries.

Neidhart's influence.

His influence is particularly noticeable on a group of Swabian Minnesingers who wrote about the middle of the thirteenth century: in the poetry of Burkart von Hohenfels, Ulrich von Winterstetten, and, most gifted of the three, Gottfried von Neifen, there is an attempt to combine the courtly Minnesang with the later peasant poetry.[1] Another poet, to whom Neidhart served as model, was "the Tanhäuser" (Tanhûser), a singer of some individuality.[2] Although of noble family, the Tanhäuser evidently led the life of a Spielmann. He, too, shows a preference for dance measures, but he seems to have come under Romance influence. He imitates the French "Pastourel," a form of poetry which was more or less analogous to the German peasant lyric. But the Tanhäuser remains essentially a Spielmann, delighting in rough humour and witty satire, even when the shafts of his satire are directed against himself. The ceremonial Minnedienst fares badly at his hands: his songs proclaim more plainly than the insincerities of Ulrich von Liechtenstein that the day of the Minnedienst is past.

The Tanhäuser.

Another satirist of the Minnesang is the poet known as Herr Steinmar, probably Steinmar von Klingenau in the Thurgau, who lived in the second half of the thirteenth century. In Steinmar's verses,[3] just as in the Tanhäuser's, what appears to be satire is often merely a reflection of the change that was rapidly coming over social life. Steinmar is a "Bauerndichter," but he looks upon life from a purely democratic standpoint, adapting his poetic ideals to the solid

Steinmar.

[1] K. Bartsch, *l.c.*, 148 ff., 155 ff., 161 ff.; D.N.L., *l.c.*, 143 ff.
[2] K. Bartsch, *l.c.*, 193 ff.; D.N.L., *l.c.*, 185 ff.
[3] K. Bartsch, *l.c.*, 239 ff.; D.N.L., *l.c.*, 222 ff.

comforts of the burgher's life, and singing the glories of autumn instead of spring.

At the beginning of the fourteenth century we meet once more, and for the last time in the history of the German lyric, with a Minnesinger of the old type. This was Meister Johannes Hadlaub (Hadloub), a citizen of Zurich, and friend of Rüdiger Manesse and his son, the first collectors of German Minnelieder. As a poet, Hadlaub is content to imitate; he depicts his shy, retiring love for a noble lady, and the Minnedienst in which it expressed itself, in verses that are constant echoes of the older Minnesang.[1] The incongruities that strike us in Ulrich von Liechtenstein's poetry are still more conspicuous in the lyrics of this plain Zurich burgher of more than a generation later. Hadlaub also, it may be noted, wrote peasant lyrics; but it is doubtful if there was even as much sincerity behind his rustic sentiments as behind his love poetry. Johannes Hadlaub.

As a "Spruchdichter," Walther von der Vogelweide's most important successor was Reinmar von Zweter.[2] This poet was born on the Rhine about 1200, like his master learned his art in Austria, and lived until after the middle of the century. His "Sprüche" afford a motley commentary upon the life of his time: the burning questions of the day serve as materials for satiric or didactic treatment. There is even a slight flavour of the satire of a later age in Reinmar's attacks on erring monks, on drunkenness and gambling; but it is only a foretaste. In politics, Reinmar took up the war against the Pope where Walther had left it; but nothing demonstrates more clearly how inferior a poet Reinmar was than do these political "Sprüche." On the modern reader his poetry leaves, as a whole, an impression of monotony, for it is almost exclusively in one form, or, to use the technical expression, in one "tone." Reinmar von Zweter.

Although the "Spruchdichtung" was one of the few forms of Middle High German poetry which lived on until the age of the Reformation, it did not escape the universal process of decay that set in between the close of the one epoch and the beginning of the next. As an example of the

1 K. Bartsch, *l.c.*, 268 ff.; D.N.L., *l.c.*, 250 ff.

2 Ed. G. Roethe, Leipzig, 1887; K. Bartsch, *l.c.*, 173 ff., and D.N.L., *l.c.*, 166 ff.

"The Marner."

medieval Spruchdichtung in its period of decay, one poet must suffice—the so-called "Marner,"[1] a Swabian, who was murdered as an old man about the year 1270. The Marner was a learned poet, who could write Latin verses as well as German, and in his Sprüche, which form the greater part of his verse, he displays wide theological and scientific knowledge. Compared with Reinmar von Zweter, his range is varied; but the variety is too often attained by sacrificing poetry to learning. In the Marner's poetry the tendency to point a moral has obtained the upper hand, and, unfortunately for the German Spruch, his example was only too faithfully imitated in the following centuries. Didacticism is the disturbing element, not only in the lyrics of minor poets, such as Meister Boppe, Rumezland and Regenbogen,[2] but also in the most famous of all—Heinrich von Meissen, "the Frauenlob." Heinrich von Meissen belongs, however, to the succeeding age and to a new race of poets; he is not a Minnesinger, but the first of the Meistersingers.

Later Spruchdichter.

[1] K. Bartsch, *l.c.*, 179 ff.
[2] K. Bartsch, *l.c.*, 220, 226, 283.

CHAPTER VIII.

DIDACTIC POETRY AND PROSE.

An unconscious and unexpressed belief in "art for art's sake" is apparent in the best decades of Middle High German literature as in all great literary periods. The unreflecting singers who sang their own love-songs or told their tales of chivalry did not consider too carefully means and ends; they only thought of how they could communicate to their hearers or readers the pleasure they themselves felt. But as reflection gradually took the place of naïveté, and the didactic spirit began to assert itself, the unreasoning idealism of the old art disappeared. The encroachment of this spirit upon Middle High German poetry was one of the earliest indications of its decay. Didacticism was, however, more than a purely literary or intellectual phenomenon; it was associated with a change that was coming over the whole structure of medieval society—namely, that brought about by the rise of the middle classes. The high-minded, aristocratic knight had to give place to the practical burgher, whose life was made up of petty interests and cares, with whom even religion assumed a sternly practical and moral aspect.

The didactic spirit and the rise of the middle classes.

Among the early literature of this didactic nature may be noted a *Tugendlehre*, a collection of moral apothegms from the Latin classics, translated into German by a Thuringian churchman, Wernher von Elmdorf, and a German version of the distichs which, in the middle ages, passed for Cato's instruction of his son: for centuries these *Disticha Catonis* enjoyed popularity as a school-book. More important than either of these works is the so-called *Winsbeke*,[1] written

Wernher von Elmdorf.

The *Disticha Catonis*.

Der Winsbeke.

[1] Ed. M. Haupt, Leipzig, 1845; *Didaktik aus der Zeit der Kreuzzüge*, bearbeitet von H. Hildebrand (D.N.L., 9 [1888]), 151 ff.

by a Herr von Windesbach, in Bavaria, about the beginning of the thirteenth century. A father here instructs his son—a favourite form of moral text-book, of which the *Disticha Catonis* was the model—in the virtues and duties of knighthood. But *Der Winsbeke* is, at the same time, a poem of genuine worth, and stands on a higher level than the later didactic literature of the age. The author has escaped the levelling influence of clerical or middle-class ideas, and still regards the ideals of knighthood with sympathy; his poem is thus inspired with the same whole-hearted faith in these ideals which we find in the Arthurian epic. The following is a characteristic strophe:—

"Sun, wilt du erzenîe nemen,
ich wil dich lêren einen tranc:
lât dirz diu sælde wol gezemen,
du wirdest selten tugende kranc,
dîn leben sî kurz od ez sî lanc.
leg in dîn herze ein reinez wîp
mit stæter liebe sunder wanc."[1]

It might be said that after Ulrich von Liechtenstein's *Frauendienst*, *Der Winsbeke* forms the best commentary on the knightly life of the thirteenth century. A companion poem—a mother's instruction to her daughter—by a later and a much inferior hand, is appended to the *Winsbeke* under the title *Diu Winsbekin*.

Diu Winsbekin.

Thomasin von Zirclære's *Welscher Gast*, 1215.

The religious element, which is absent from the *Winsbeke*, is particularly strong in *Der welsche Gast*,[2] a poem of some 15,000 verses written by Thomasin von Zirclære, whose family—in Italian, Cerchiari—had its seat in the neighbourhood of Udine, in north-eastern Italy. Thomasin was a canon in the cathedral of Aquileja. The title of the work, which was written in 1215, implies that it was sent by its Italian author into German lands as a "guest." In *Der welsche Gast* the religious and moralising spirit asserts itself, but chivalry is not yet dethroned. Although didactic, there is nothing *bürgerlich* in its tone; the lower classes do not exist for the author, except to be kept in their place. He still sees in the

[1] "Sohn, willst du Arznei nehmen, (so) will ich dich einen Trank lehren; lässt die Glücksgöttin dir es angemessen sein, (so) wirst du selten schwach an Tugend (*i.e.*, Tüchtigkeit) (sein), sei dein Leben kurz oder sei es lang. Lege in dein Herz ein reines Weib mit steter Liebe ohne Wanken" (14).

[2] Ed. H. Rückert, Quedlinburg, 1852; selections in D.N.L., 9, 120 ff. Cp. A. E. Schönbach, *Die Anfänge des deutschen Minnesanges*, Graz, 1898, 35 ff.

Arthurian epics the ideal text-books for the youth of the time, but they have only worth for him in so far as they are edifying: to their poetic beauties he is blind. In the eyes of this clerical Lombard, the root of all the evil in the world is *unstæte*, "lack of character," while its converse, *stæte*, is the source of all virtues. To do justice and act generously are the cardinal virtues of the noble knight. Thomasin is not a violent champion of his party, but his strictly clerical point of view is apparent from his defence of Innocent III., the Pope against whom Walther von der Vogelweide launched his bitterest diatribes. He endeavours to persuade Friedrich II. to undertake a crusade, and would gladly see all heretics treated as they were treated by Duke Leopold of Austria:—

> "der die ketzer sieden kan . . .
> er wil niht daz der vâlant
> zebreche sîn zende zehant,
> swenner si ezze, dâ von heizet er
> si sieden unde braten sêr."[1]

The middle-class spirit, from which both the *Winsbeke* and the *Welsche Gast* were free, set in with full force in the next work that has to be considered, Freidank's *Bescheidenheit*,[2] the most popular didactic work of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Freidank (Vrîdanc)—this was obviously not the author's real name—was a wandering Spielmann, but of his life little more is known than that he took part in the crusade of 1229. His work may have been begun in 1215 or 1216, but was not completed until after his return from the East. *Bescheidenheit* — the Middle High German word means "wisdom," or, more accurately, the wisdom that comes from experience — belongs to the category of "Spruch" poetry. Freidank writes pithy, epigrammatic verses, which resemble in form the strophes attributed to the Spervogel, and some of Walther von der Vogelweide's political poems. There is nothing courtly or chivalric in his work; it is popular, democratic, coarsely witty; many of the epigrammatic couplets might have come direct from the lips of the people, and

Freidank's *Bescheidenheit*, ca. 1215-30.

[1] "Der die Ketzer sieden kann. . . . Er will nicht, dass der Teufel seine Zähne sogleich zerbreche, wenn er sie esse, darum heisst er sie sieden und braten sehr" (12,683 ff.)

[2] Ed. H. E. Bezzenberger, Halle, 1872, and F. Sandross, Berlin, 1877. Cp. D.N.L., 9, 251 ff.

have passed into popular proverbs. Freidank is the first forerunner of the middle-class poetry of the sixteenth century; in his attitude towards Pope and Church there is even something of the spirit of the Reformation. Not that his religious ideas differed materially from those of his time—with all his wit, his poetry is distinctly pious in tone; to trust and serve God is in his eyes the beginning of all "Bescheidenheit"—but his sympathies are with the Kaiser, and he is not blind to the Pope's failings. After all, the Pope is but a man, and—

"Zwei swert in einer scheide
verderbent lîhte beide,
als der bâbst des rîches gert
so verderbent beidiu swert."[1]

In his attitude towards the monks, Freidank is still more outspoken. He sees them, in spite of his unquestioning religious faith, with the eyes of the common people; he does not attempt to conceal their weaknesses, but he treats them, on the whole, with an easy-going indulgence. Once in this connection he reminds us—

"Ich weiz wol daz ein horwic hant
selten weschet wîz gewant.
Wem mac der lûter wazzer geben,
den man siht in der hulwe sweben?
Swer râmic sî der wasche sich
und wasche danne ouch mich."[2]

But there is nothing in his verses of the virulence of the next century. Freidank is not a satirist; he is, in the main, content with the world as he finds it. His verses represent, as those of no other poet of his century, the ordinary outlook of the German people; they are a proof that the literary ideals of the higher classes were mainly confined to those classes. If we except the strophes *Von minne unde wîben*, it may be said that the ideas of chivalry had practically no influence on Freidank.

[1] "Zwei Schwerter in einer Scheide verderben leicht beide (einander); wenn der Papst nach dem Reiche begierig ist, so verderben beide Schwerter" (152, 12 ff.)

[2] "Ich weiss wohl, dass eine schmutzige Hand ein weisses Gewand selten (rein) wäscht. Wem kann der lauteres Wasser geben, den man in der Pfütze schwimmen sieht? Wer russig ist, der wasche (erst) sich und wasche dann auch mich" (70, 6 ff.)

To a much later date, to the period between 1283 and 1299, belong several satiric poems written in Lower Austria, which, with all the realism of the later thirteenth century, paint the social change of the age: on the one hand, the degeneration of the knight into a freebooter; on the other, the new ideal of womanhood as the virtuous "Hausfrau." The form which the unknown author of these satires prefers is the familiar one of question and answer, and he seems to have intended that at least the longest of his poems should bear the title *Der kleine Lucidarius*, the *Lucidarius* being a popular encyclopædic work in Latin which had served him as model. All the satires have, however, been edited under the name of Seifried Helbling,[1] a title applicable, strictly speaking, only to one of the poems, which purports to be a letter from a Spielmann of that name. Seifried Helbling.

The didactic and satirical movement in Middle High German literature may be said to culminate in *Der Renner*, by Hugo von Trimberg,[2] who was a schoolmaster in Teuerstadt, a village on the outskirts of Bamberg. *Der Renner* was written at the turn of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, when the author was comparatively advanced in life; it seems to have been completed about 1300, but additions were made to it until as late as 1313. It was not Hugo von Trimberg's only work; besides Latin poems which show great learning, he wrote seven other German poems, although the title of only one of these, *Der Sammler*, has come down to us. In the *Renner*, it is evident that the age of knighthood is past; the middle-class spirit of this plain-minded although learned schoolmaster makes short work of the heroes of chivalry. The great epics of a hundred years before are, in his estimation, only a collection of lies. His own poem is based—so far as it can be said to have a plan at all—upon the allegory of a pear-tree laden with ripe fruit. The tree is Adam and Eve, the fruit mankind; the wind comes, the wind symbolising selfishness and self-assertion, and shakes down the pears; they fall into the thorns of arrogance, the well of avarice, and the grass of Hugo von Trimberg. *Der Renner*, ca. 1300.

[1] *Seifried Helbling*, ed. J. Seemüller, Halle, 1886. Cp. D.N.L., 9, 195 ff.

[2] Ed. by the Bamberg Historische Verein, 1833-36. Cp. *Lehrhafte Litteratur des 14. und 15. Jahrhunderts*, herausg. von F. Vetter (D.N.L., 12, 1 [1888]), 256 ff. On Hugo's life, see K. Janicke in the *Germania*, 2 (1857), 363 ff.

repentance. The book is divided into parts, each of which is devoted to a principal vice or sin. But there is only the shadow of a plan, for Hugo von Trimberg is not concerned about artistic considerations of form. His book is a veritable "Renner," and in another sense from that intended by its author;[1] it "runs" through the whole range of human life. The writer's attitude towards the Court epic suggests that of a later Protestantism towards worldly amusements, but he does not preach asceticism. On the contrary, he takes pleasure in seeing people innocently happy and has a large fund of honest, homely humour which prevents him from losing himself in religious didacticism. As a poet, he has not the ability or standing of Freidank, from whom he borrows freely, but the popular and straightforward way in which he tells his story gives interest to his verse in spite of its mediocrity.

The Franciscans.

Another factor which helped to disintegrate the higher social life of the thirteenth century was the rise of the Franciscan order of monks. With them passed over Europe another of those waves of asceticism by which the religious life of the middle ages was from time to time rejuvenated. The Franciscans preached the renunciation of worldly treasures, and the return to a simple life—virtues which were naturally not in harmony with the social ideals of chivalry; but their doctrines received on this account a warmer welcome from the common people, and from the inhabitants of the towns. The hearty, popular tone in which these monks advocated their principles, the practical, and at the same time not unpoetic, form of their sermons, appealed to the hearts of the middle classes. To two Franciscan monks of Bavaria we owe the best specimens of German prose in the thirteenth century. David of Augsburg, who died in 1272, not only preached in German—his German sermons are lost—but wrote several German tracts,[2] filled with the glowing enthusiasm for mysticism which was to be so important an element in the intellectual life of the coming centuries, and his scholar,

David of Augsburg, died 1272.

[1] The title is explained by the lines:—

"Renner ist ditz buoch genant,
wanne ez sol rennen durch di lant."

[2] F. Pfeiffer, *Deutsche Mystiker des 13. Jahrhunderts*, Leipzig, 1845, 1, 309 ff.

Berthold of Regensburg (ca. 1220-72),[1] was the greatest German preacher of the middle ages. From 1250 onwards, Berthold wandered from one end of South Germany to the other, addressing, mostly in the open air, audiences that numbered many thousands. His language has all the qualities of a good popular prose; it is direct, dramatic, sincere; but Berthold had also at his command a wealth of imagery which, occasionally, recalls the poetry of the popular epics. It is still possible, in reading these sermons, to realise the persuasive energy of this preacher in the wilderness, who thundered against the vices of the rich and called sinners to repentance, until his hearers threw themselves at his feet.

Berthold of Regensburg, ca. 120-272.

Of other prose in this epoch there is not much to say. About 1220 Eike von Repkow, an Anhalt knight, wrote, in Low German, a code of Saxon law, the so-called *Spigel der Saxen* or *Sachsenspiegel*, a book not without a certain literary interest. It was widely used, and called forth many High German imitations, the most important being the *Land- und Lehnrechtsbuch* or *Schwabenspiegel*, which in its oldest from was probably written about 1260. From Low Germany came also the first German prose chronicle, the *Sachsenchronik*, written about 1237.

Other prose.

The chief characteristic of Middle High German literature, regarded as a whole, is its simplicity: no other period is so free from complex developments. This simplicity was not attained, as to some extent in the Old High German period, by the sifting process of an imperfect tradition; the conditions of German life in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries were not favourable to a complicated literary activity, and literature was restricted, as a natural consequence, to certain well-defined channels. Except for the utilitarian writings of preachers and lawgivers, prose virtually did not exist, and apart from the ecclesiastical performances referred to at the close of Part I., there was no drama. Thus only three main categories of verse—romance, lyric, and satire—are left, and each of these falls again into two divisions, corresponding to the two literary classes, namely, the Spielleute and the Court poets. On the one hand, the Spielmann drew upon the popular sagas and traditions for his romances; he retold, in the humorous, careless way peculiar to him, the

[1] Ed. F. Pfeiffer and J. Strobl, 2 vols., Vienna, 1862-80.

stories of the Germanic past. The Court singer, on the other hand, preferred the romances of the Arthurian cycle, which, early in the twelfth century, had received an aristocratic stamp in France. The German national epic itself, as represented by the *Nibelungenlied* and *Gudrun*, had arisen, as we have seen, under the influence which the tastes of the higher classes exerted on the Spielleute. The clerical poets, who had played the chief, and, indeed, only *rôle* in the preceding period, ceased, after the beginning of the period, to be a factor in Middle High German poetry. In the lyric, the same two divisions may be observed, but they are less clearly marked. The aristocratic Minnesang, like the aristocratic romance, owed much to France, but it became, in a far higher degree than the Court epic, a national form of poetic art. Almost from the beginning, its position in the lyric poetry of the age was similar to that which the *Nibelungenlied* occupied in the epic, and to find a specific Spielmann's lyric, or its equivalent, we are obliged to turn to the songs of the Goliards and to the Spruch poetry. The Spruch of the Spielmann contained the germ of the later national and patriotic song, just as the Spielmann's epics contained the germ of the national epic. And in the Spruch poetry, too, the satire of the age — whether aristocratic like *Der Winsbeke*, or popular like *Bescheidenheit* — found its most congenial outlet. The satirical attempts of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries were, however, insignificant compared with the satire of the following age, the age that culminated in the Protestant Reformation.

PART III.

EARLY NEW HIGH GERMAN LITERATURE

1350–1700

CHAPTER I.

THE DECAY OF ROMANCE. SATIRE AND BEAST FABLE.

FROM the close of the fourteenth century to the beginning of the eighteenth, the classical language of the Middle High German Court poets was passing by gradual stages into the modern classical German of Lessing and Goethe. The period we have now to consider is thus, as far as language is concerned, a Transition Period, and the same designation might possibly be adopted for the literature of the period. But the literary activity in Germany between 1350 and 1700 was so extraordinarily varied and complicated that it is not easy to bring it under a general title of this nature. Moreover, to describe as a Transition Period more than three centuries of a nation's literary history, centuries which included events of such far-reaching importance as the Reformation and the Renaissance, is to set an unduly low value upon the literary activity, or upon, what is hardly less important, the dynamic forces at work behind the literature of the age. The word "Transition" is, however, strictly applicable to two stages in the literature of this period, the first of which lies between the end of the Middle High German period and the age of the Reformation, the second between the Reformation and the beginnings of modern German classical literature. In the present chapter, we have to turn our attention to the earlier of these stages.

Social changes.

With the close of the Crusades, chivalry lost its ideal background and the orders of knighthood were deprived of much of their prestige. But the disappearance of the crusader was only one of many causes which hastened the decay of chivalry. The invention of gunpowder changed

the methods of warfare, and made the knight of the old stamp in great measure superfluous. The issue of battles depended more on masses of foot-soldiers than on the valour of individuals. At the same time, as a consequence of the increasing stability in political affairs—a stability which was mainly due to the humanising influence of the knightly classes—the medieval towns rose in power and importance; commerce became a factor of greater weight than it had ever been before, and, by virtue of their wealth, the merchant citizens became rivals of the nobility. Thus the knightly classes, who had formerly represented all that was noble and courtly in human bearing and intercourse, were soon forced to struggle sordidly for their existence, and it was little wonder that the lower members of this class should have degenerated into avowed freebooters.

When we consider the effects of this social change upon literature, it must be admitted that it was no change for the better. The finer graces of chivalry had no counterpart in the towns, where life was honest and straightforward, but, as yet, without polish or culture. Indeed, the social gulf between the nobility and the people in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries was so great, that when literature passed over from the one to the other, it had, as it were, to go back again to its beginnings. The sense of beauty and the feeling for rhythm which had been laboriously attained by the higher classes at the opening of the twelfth century, disappeared as completely as if they had never existed. Literature became once more crude and naïve, formless and unmusical. The middle classes, it is true, still loved the old stories of chivalry and prowess, just as when in earlier days they sat at the feet of the knightly singer, but now that they themselves had become the tellers of these stories, the narrative alone remained; all the qualities that made such stories art were gone. Their place was taken by unimaginative simplicity, a jingling doggerel or lumbering prose, and not rarely a coarse humour. Instead of the unworldly ideals of the knight, we find the utilitarian didacticism which is apparently inseparable from the middle-class mind in all times. This is the general characteristic of the first stage in the transition from the middle ages to modern times; it is a transition from the literature of chivalry to that of the

The middle-class spirit in literature.

burgher, a shifting of the literary centre of gravity from the nobility to the middle classes. It is not a great epoch, but for the literary student it is an epoch of importance. In these comparatively "dark" centuries are to be traced the sources of modern German literature.

Romances of chivalry.

The romance of chivalry died hard. Almost as late as the Reformation, attempts were made to keep the old traditions alive and, especially, to preserve the great art of Wolfram von Eschenbach. Between 1331 and 1336, two Alsatians, Claus Wisse and Philipp Colin, supplemented Wolfram's *Parzival* with a poem which is more than twice the length of *Parzival* itself,[1] and, in 1400, Hans von Bühel, another Alsatian, wrote a long epic based on the Middle High German *Mai und Beaflor*, entitled *Die Königstochter von Frankreich*.[2] Many favourite stories of the thirteenth century were told anew in the fourteenth and fifteenth: we possess, for instance, from this period a *Trojanischer Krieg*, an *Alexander der Grosse*, and the so-called *Karlmeinet*,[3] a collection of sagas of which Charles the Great forms the centre,—all in rhymed verses. But in vain, about 1450, did Püterich von Reichertshausen (1400-69) hold up Parzival as the ideal of noble manhood; and when, towards 1490, in his *Buch der Abenteuer*, Ulrich Füetrer, a poet and painter of Munich, made another vigorous attempt to revive the Arthurian sagas, the result was almost ludicrous. The ideals of chivalry were clearly incompatible with the sober everyday life of the German burgher.

Ulrich Füetrer.

Mysticism and allegory.

As a consequence of the more spiritual trend in theology, to which we shall return in a subsequent chapter, a strain of poetic mysticism made its appearance, which may be regarded as a starting-point for the theological and didactic literature of the sixteenth century. Heinrich von Hesler's poetic paraphrase of the *Apocalypse*, Thilo von Culm's book *Von den sieben Siegeln*, and the various versions of the *Speculum humanæ salvationis* are typical of this new movement. An allegory of the chess figures, *De moribus hominum et officiis nobilium super ludo Scacorum* (ca. 1300), by

[1] Ed. K. Schorbach, Strassburg, 1888.
[2] Ed. T. Mersdorf, Oldenburg, 1867.
[3] Ed. A. von Keller (Stuttg. Litt. Ver., 45), 1858. Cp. K. Bartsch, *Über Karlmeinet*, Nürnberg, 1861.

Jacobus de Cessolis—in German, *Das Schachbuch*[1]—enjoyed even greater popularity in Germany than in Southern Europe. A similar mystic and allegorical tendency is noticeable in purely secular literature; in fact, we find in the German poetry of this age a parallel development to that which in France had culminated in the *Roman de la Rose*. From the beginning of the fourteenth century onwards, the "love allegory" appears more frequently in narrative poetry. The earliest poem of this distinctly allegorical nature is *Der Minne Lehre*,[2] written at the close of the thirteenth century by Heinzelein of Constance; the best, in spite of its complicated allegory, is *Die Jagd*, by a Bavarian nobleman, Hadamar von Laber.[3] An important poet of this group was the Swabian, Herman von Sachsenheim, whose home was also Constance, where he died in 1458. *Des Spiegels Abenteuer* and *Die Mörin* (1453),[4] by this writer, are elaborate allegories, in which the apparatus of the Arthurian epic often contrasts incongruously with the popular tone and humorous satire. *Die Mörin* takes the form—a favourite one with the allegorical poets—of a trial. The "Mooress" is a servant of Venus and Tanhäuser; she accuses the author of the poem of inconstancy in love, and the trial takes place in the Venusberg with the result that he is acquitted. Herman von Sachsenheim's allegory is occasionally tedious, but *Die Mörin* is, on the whole, one of the most readable German poems of the fifteenth century.

Herman von Sachsenheim, died 1458.

Maximilian I., 1459-1519.

On the boundary-line between the middle ages and modern times stands the romantic figure of the Emperor Maximilian I. (1459-1519). Although Maximilian was in sympathy with the social and political changes of the new age, and had more than a catholic tolerance for humanism and the Renaissance, his heart was with the old epics of chivalry, and he caused magnificent manuscripts of them to be prepared. The "last of the knights," he was also the last great patron of medieval literature. With his name are associated two semi-historical

[1] Cp. F. Vetter, *Lehrhafte Litteratur des* 14. *und* 15. *Jahrhunderts*, 1 (D.N.L., 12, 1 [1888]), 91 ff.

[2] Ed. F. Pfeiffer, Leipzig, 1852. Cp. P. Piper, *Höfische Epik*, 3 (D.N.L., 4, 1, 3), 518 ff.

[3] Ed. J. A. Schmeller (Stuttg. Litt. Ver., 20), 1850.

[4] Ed. E. Martin (Stuttg. Litt. Ver., 137), 1878. Cp. F. Vetter, *l.c.*, 1, 163 ff.

romances. The first of these, *Der Weiss Kunig* (1512),[1] is in prose and virtually a chronicle of events in his own life and in the life of his father, Kaiser Friedrich III.; the second, the more famous *Teuerdank* (*Tewrdannck;* printed in Nürnberg, 1517),[2] although also a kind of biography of the emperor, is in verse and in the form of an allegorical romance. Neither of these books was Maximilian's unaided work, but their construction at least was due to him. *Teuerdank* is an epic of chivalrous adventure, in which the virtuous hero, from whom it takes its name, successfully overcomes all manner of trials and temptations. The ludicrously realistic nature of many of these adventures—as, for instance, when a villainous Captain Unfalo attempts the hero's life by inducing him to ascend a broken stair, to walk on a rotten piece of scaffolding, or approach a loaded cannon with a light—shows how far romance had degenerated since the time of *Parzival* and *Tristan*. The verses, which are crude and unpoetic, were probably the work of the emperor's scribe, Melchior Pfintzing, a native of Nürnberg. *Teuerdank* has almost no value as literature, but it enjoyed considerable popularity until as late as the end of the seventeenth century. In the history of the present period it is a landmark of importance, for it is the very last poem that was modelled on the Court epic.

Der Weiss Kunig, 1512.

Teuerdank, 1517.

With the fifteenth century began for Germany the age of prose: here, as in France, the medieval verse epic had to make way for the prose romance, and so strong was the current of the time that even the very classes to whom we owe the epic of chivalry assisted in bringing about the change. The daughter of a Duke of Lorraine, Gräfin Elisabeth von Nassau-Saarbrücken, is the author of one of these prose romances, *Loher vnd Maller* (1407), which is based on a French original; and thirty years later, the same lady again translated a French epic into German prose—namely, *Hug Schapeler* (1437), the subject of which is the love adventures of Hugo Capet. Besides stories of chivalry, the national epics were told again and again in

Prose romances.

[1] Ed. A. Schultz, Vienna, 1891.

[2] Ed. K. Goedeke (*Deutsche Dichter des 16. Jahrh.*, 10), Leipzig, 1878. Cp. E. Wolff, *Reinke de Vos und satirisch-didaktische Dichtung* (D.N.L., 19 [1893]), 213 ff.

prose, and many of them in the form of "Volksbücher" are still widely read. Occasionally, as in the *Lied vom hürnen Seyfried*,[1] one of these sagas was recast in rough strophes, while in the so-called *Dresdener Heldenbuch* (1472), which was compiled by Kaspar von der Rön, a native of Münnerstadt in Franconia, the Middle High German *Heldenbuch* was denuded of its poetic dignity, and rewritten in the doggerel of the century. But prose was and remained the favourite vehicle of expression.

Comic romances and anecdotes.

While the epic had thus to yield to the prose romance, it is not surprising that another *genre* of Middle High German poetry gained, rather than lost in favour, as the higher epic deteriorated. This was the comic, satiric poetry descriptive of peasant life, the beginnings of which are to be found in *Meier Helmbrecht*, and in the poetry of Neidhart von Reuenthal. An application of the peasant epic, which commended itself to the writers of the fourteenth century, was as a satire of the decaying Court poetry; and it is in this form that the comic epic first appears in German literature. In the fourteenth century, a Swabian poet wrote a short poem on the marriage of a peasant girl, and in the first half of the following one, Heinrich Wittenweiler, a Swiss, parodied the whole apparatus of chivalry in *Der Ring*,[2] a grotesque description of a rural wedding.

The short, comic anecdote was, however, more to the taste of the time, and more, too, within the power of the writers of the time, than were sustained epic narratives. The Stricker's *Pfaffe Amis* found many imitators in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries; more especially from the close of the fifteenth onwards, this "Schwankdichtung" plays a large *rôle* in the literary production of Germany. To the last quarter of this century belongs a notable collection of anecdotes, which purports to be the work of the Middle High German "Dorf" poet, who reappears here as "Neidhart Fuchs"; and, similar to them, are the merry adventures of the *Pfaffe von Kalenberg*. The *Pfaffe von Kalenberg* is spirited and amusing, but strikes a coarser note

The *Pfaffe von Kalenberg*.

[1] Ed. W. Golther (*Neudrucke deutscher Litteraturwerke des 16. und 17. Jahrh.*, No. 81, 82), Halle, 1889. Cp. P. Piper in *Die Nibelungen*, 1 (D.N.L., 6, 2 [1889]), 143 ff.

[2] Ed. L. Bechstein (Stuttg. Litt. Ver., 23), 1851; cp. F. Vetter, *Lehrhafte Litteratur des 14. und 15. Jahrhunderts*, 1, 415 ff.

than its Middle High German prototype, *Amis*. The author, Philipp Frankfurter, was a native of Vienna. More than a generation later, Georg—or, as he called himself, Achilles Jason—Widmann published, as a continuation of the *Pfaffe von Kalenberg*, a collection of witty anecdotes under the title *Histori Peter Lewen*. And the traditionary Spielmann's heroes, such as Solomon's witty adversary Morolf or Markolf, still remained popular favourites.[1] But all these "Schwänke" were thrown into the shade by the stories that collected round the prince of rogues, Till Eulenspiegel. Sly in the guise of honesty, witty while pretending to be only stupid, Eulenspiegel, who would seem to have been a real figure of the fourteenth century, has become one of the favourite rascals of the German imagination. A veritable Reineke Fuchs in human guise, he loves nothing better than misunderstandings, he delights in mischief purely for mischief's sake, and his favourite butt is always the townsfolk. The original, undoubtedly Low German collection of Eulenspiegel's adventures, which dates from 1483, is lost, but there exist innumerable High German versions—the oldest, printed at Strassburg in 1515, under the title *Ein Kurtzweilig lesen von Dyl Ulenspiegel geboren vss dem land zu Brunsswick*[2]—and translations of *Eulenspiegel* were made into half-a-dozen European tongues.

Histori Peter Lewen, ca. 1550.

Till Eulenspiegel.

In these centuries, too, floods of oriental stories, *facetiæ* and anecdotes, spread over Germany from the south, the first result, as far as literature was concerned, of the Italian Renaissance. But in the hands of the translators, the coarseness of these stories became more coarse, and the wit gave place to buffoonery. From the fifteenth century, we possess two poetic versions of the collection of Eastern "novelle" known as *Die Sieben Weisen Meister*, and the *Gesta Romanorum* found in this age new translators and new admirers. Even the Church saw that it might with advantage employ this popular class of literature in the form of parable and fable. In 1522, a Franciscan monk, Johannes Pauli, published a semi-religious, semi-didactic collection of

Anecdotal literature.

[1] Selections from these collections of Schwänke, edited by F. Bobertag, *Narrenbuch* (D.N.L., 11 [1885]).

[2] Ed. H. Knust, *Neudrucke*, 55, 56, Halle, 1885. Cp. F. Bobertag, *Volksbücher des 16. Jahrhunderts* (D.N.L., 25 [1887]), 1 ff.

J. Pauli's *Schimpf vnd Ernst*, 1522.

anecdotes and adventures under the title *Schimpf* (*i.e.*, *Scherz*) *vnd Ernst*.[1] Pauli is an excellent story-teller, above all, witty and brief, and, even when most didactic, knows how to maintain the reader's interest. *Schimpf vnd Ernst* enjoyed enormous popularity and was reprinted upwards of thirty times. To the *Rollwagenbüchlein* of Jörg Wickram (1555), and the *Wendunmuth* of H. W. Kirchhoff (1563), in which the anecdotal literature of the period is to be seen at its best, we shall return in a later chapter.

The Beast Fable.

Still another form of literary narrative, one which had lain dormant throughout the Middle High German period, came into prominence in these centuries. This was the Beast Fable. About 1349, at the very beginning of the period we are considering, a Dominican monk of Bern, Ulrich Boner, translated a hundred Latin fables into fresh, humorous verse, pointed with obvious morals, and to these he gave the title of *Der Edelstein*.[2] The popularity of Boner's fables is evident from the fact that the *Edelstein* was the first German book to be printed (1461). From the fifteenth century until late in the eighteenth, the interest which the German people took in Æsop's fables showed no sign of diminishing. Heinrich Stainhöwel of Ulm (1412-82 or 83), who also translated Boccaccio's *Griseldis* (ca. 1471) and *De claris mulieribus* (1473), made a Latin collection of Æsopian beast stories from various sources, accompanying them by a translation into German prose. This *Esopus*[3] was printed at Ulm between 1475 and 1480, and remained a favourite book for two centuries. Of more importance from a literary standpoint is a famous collection of fables, the *Esopus*, *Gantz New gemacht vnd in Reimen gefasst, mit sampt Hundert Newer Fabeln* (1548),[4] made in the following century by Burkard Waldis (ca. 1490-1556 or 57). Waldis, by birth a Hessian, was a Franciscan monk in Riga, who became a convert to Lutheranism. His fables are consequently tinged with the anti-Catholic polemics of the age, but they are vividly told, and were a valuable

Ulrich Boner's *Edelstein*, 1349.

H. Stainhöwel, 1412—ca. 1482.

B. Waldis, ca. 1490-1556.

[1] Ed. H. Oesterley (Stuttg. Litt. Ver., 85), 1866; F. Bobertag, *Vierhundert Schwänke des* 16. *Jahrhunderts* (D.N.L., 24 [1888]), 1 ff.

[2] Ed. F. Pfeiffer, Leipzig, 1844. Cp. F. Vetter, *l.c.*, 1, 7 ff.

[3] Ed. H. Oesterley (Stuttg. Litt. Ver., 117), 1873; the *De claris mulieribus*, ed. K. Drescher, in the same series, 205, 1895. Cp. F. Vetter, *l.c.*, 1, 87 ff.

[4] Ed. J. Tittmann, 2 vols. (*Deutsche Dichter des* 16. *Jahrh.*, 16, 17), Leipzig, 1882; cp. E. Wolff, *l.c.*, 273 ff.

mine for the fable-writers of the eighteenth century. More satirical and polemical are the fables which form the *Buch von der Tugent vnd Weissheit* (1550) by Erasmus Alberus (ca. 1500-53).[1]

E. Alberus, 1500-53.

The Beast Epic proper, however, was kept alive, not in High German, but in Low German lands. About the middle of the thirteenth century, Willem, an East Flemish poet, made an admirable version of that part of the French *Roman de Renart* which describes how the Lion held his court. The Fox "Reinaert" is condemned to die, but obtains a respite by promising to show the Lion hidden treasure, and is set wholly at liberty on condition that he makes a pilgrimage to Rome. The Bear and the Wolf provide Reinaert with pouch and shoes made from their skins, and the rascal of course escapes scot-free. In a second Flemish, or rather West Flemish, version,[2] written about 1375, the story is remodelled and extended. In both these versions the satiric and didactic spirit which seems to be inseparable from the Beast epic in all its forms is present, but it first takes a prominent part in a version from the fifteenth century by Hinrik van Alkmar. This writer divided the story into books and chapters, providing each with a prose commentary in which the moral and religious bearings of the poem were set forth. Only a few fragments of Hinrik's version have reached us, but an unknown Low Saxon poet made a translation of it, which was printed under the title *Reynke de Vos*,[3] at Lübeck in 1498.

Willem's *Reinaert de Vos*, ca. 1250.

Hinrik van Alkmar.

Reynke de Vos is the most famous literary work the Low German peoples have produced: its witty, incisive humour and sly satire, the naturalness of its diction, the skill with which the various animals are characterised, above all, the human interest of Reynke's adventures, have made it one of the most popular German books of all times, and, thanks to Goethe, this popularity is hardly less widespread now than it was in the sixteenth century. Its literary influence on the satire of the Reformation age was especially great, and spread far beyond the limits of Germany. As in the earlier Flemish versions of the story, *Reynke de Vos* opens with the

Reynke de Vos, 1498.

[1] Ed. W. Braune (*Neudrucke*, No. 104-107), Halle, 1892; E. Wolff, *l.c.*, 347 ff.

[2] Ed. E. Martin, Paderborn, 1874.

[3] Ed. K. Schröder, Leipzig, 1872; F. Prien, Halle, 1887; E. Wolff in D.N.L., 19 [1893].

Lion holding court; the various animals bring forward their accusations against the absent Fox. Brun the Bear is despatched by the king to Malepertus, Reynke's castle, with orders to summon the culprit before the court. Reynke, however, knows Brun's partiality for honey, and induces him to put his snout into a tree trunk that has been wedged apart. Withdrawing the wedge, he leaves Brun to the mercy of the peasant, from whom the bear only escapes with his life. Hyntze the Cat is now sent as envoy. The sly Fox soon wins Hyntze's confidence, but objects to set out at once; he says—

> "'Men, neve, ik wyl wol myt yu ghan
> Morgen in dem dagheschyn;
> Desse rad duncket my de beste syn.'
> Hyntze antworde up de word:
> 'Neen, gha wy nu rechte vord
> To hovewert, vnder vns beyden.
> De maen schynet lychte an der heyden,
> De wech is gud, de lucht is klar.'"

"But if I remain overnight with you," says Hyntze, "what will you give me to eat?" To this Reynke replies with sly humour—

> "'Spyse gheyt hir gantz rynge to:
> Ik wyl yu gheven, nu gy hir blyven,
> Gude versche honnichschyven,
> Soethe vnde gud, des syd bericht.'
> 'Der ath ick al myn daghe nicht,'
> Sprak Hyntze, 'hebbe gi nicht anders in dem husz?
> Ghevet my doch eyne vette musz,
> Dar mede byn ik best vorwart;
> Men honnich wert wol vor my ghespart.'"[1]

Reynke is willing to supply his guest with a mouse, and takes him to the house of the neighbouring priest, who has laid a trap for Reynke. The cat is, of course, caught in the trap, and only escapes as did his predecessor Brun.

[1] "'Aber, Neffe, ich will gern mit euch gehen, morgen in dem Tageslicht; dieser Rat dünkt mich der beste zu sein.' Hyntze antwortete auf diese Worte: 'Nein, gehen wir gerade jetzt fort nach dem Hofe zusammen. Der Mond scheint licht auf der Haide, der Weg ist gut, die Luft ist klar'" (ll. 986-993). . . . "'Speise ist hier ganz dürftig vorhanden; ich will euch geben, da ihr hier bleibt, gute, frische Honigscheiben, süss und gut, dessen seid belehrt.' 'Davon ass ich alle meine Tage nicht,' sprach Hyntze, 'habt ihr nichts anderes in dem Hause? Gebt mir doch eine fette Maus; damit bin ich am besten versorgt, aber Honig wird wohl, was mich anbetrifft, gespart'" (ll. 1002-10).

Finally Grymbart the Badger, who is friendly to Reynke, fetches him to the court. He is tried and condemned to death, but, as in the older versions, escapes by telling the king of a hidden treasure. In order that he may not need to accompany the king on his search for the treasure, Reynke proposes to go to Rome:—

"Wente Reynke, he wyl morgen vro
Staff vnde rentzel nemen an
Vnde to deme pawes to Rome ghan;
Van dannen wyl he over dat meer
Vnde kumpt ock nicht wedder heer,
Er dan dat he heft vulle afflat
Van alle der sundichlyken daet."[1]

Lampe the Hare and Bellyn the Ram accompany him, and the trio ultimately reach Malepertus; Lampe is invited into the castle and serves Reynke and his family for supper. The Fox then packs Lampe's head in his wallet and sends it back to the king with the Ram as an important letter. This is practically the close of the first book of the poem. The remaining three books, which are much shorter, are inferior in poetic interest; the didactic element assumes greater proportions, and the fact that the general outline of the narrative is the same as in the first books, suggests that the story was extended to satisfy the popular craving for a continuation.

But even the later parts of *Reynke de Vos* only foreshadow the didactic satire which ran riot in this age. Four years earlier, in 1494, the most famous German poem of its time had appeared, namely, *Das Narren schyff*, by Sebastian Brant.[2] The idea upon which this work is based is of frequent occurrence in the literature of the time, and was obviously suggested by the masquerades of the carnival; all the fools typical of human vices and follies are assembled in a ship bound for "Narragonien," but the ship, being also steered by fools, drifts aimlessly on the sea:— Brant's *Narren schyff*, 1494.

"Die gantz welt lebt in vinstrer nacht
Vnd dut in sünden blint verharren.
All strassen, gassen, sindt voll narren,

---

1 "Denn Reynke, er will morgen früh Stab und Ranzen nehmen [an], und zu dem Papst nach Rom gehen. Von dannen will er über das Meer und kommt auch nicht wieder her, eher als [dass] er völligen Ablass von all den sündlichen Thaten hat" (ll. 2602-8).

2 Ed. F. Zarncke, Leipzig, 1854; K. Goedeke (*Deutsche Dichter des 16. Jahrh.*, 7), Leipzig, 1872; F. Bobertag in D.N.L., 16 [1889].

Die nüt dann mit dorheit umbgan,
Wellen doch nit den namen han.
Des hab ich gdacht zu diser früst,
Wie ich der narren schiff vff rüst."[1]

But Brant does not carry out his plan consistently or systematically, nor does he introduce to any extent stories or anecdotes; his main purpose is direct ridicule of human follies as they presented themselves to him in the life of his time. His book is an orderless collection of short satires written in blunt, rhymed verse, occasionally with an ostentatious display of learning. From fools of crime and arrogance to rioters and spendthrifts, from meddlers and busybodies to the fools who cling with perverse self-confidence to their own ignorance, Brant's *Narrenschiff* includes every type of folly that the fifteenth century had to show. He gives a faithful picture of that moral perversity which, in the age of the Reformation, was the inevitable consequence of the clashing of the old world and the new.

Sebastian Brant, 1457-1521.

Sebastian Brant was born in Strassburg in 1457 or perhaps 1458, and educated at the University of Basle, from which, in 1489, he received the degree of *doctor utriusque juris*. In 1501 he returned to Strassburg on account of the separation of Basle from the German empire, and here he remained as town-clerk until his death in 1521. Brant not only grew up in the school of the humanists, but stood in Strassburg on the most intimate footing with them; his own earliest literary attempts were Latin poems. Neither these, nor his translations from the Latin (*Cato*, 1498), have much importance for literary history; but it is worth noting that he made a new version of Freidank's *Bescheidenheit*. He is now, however, only remembered by the *Narrenschiff*. He was not a man of progress; he had no thought of reforming either learning or religion. He saw the weaknesses of the scholastic methods of instruction and satirised them, but he suggested nothing better in their place; he dealt vigorous blows at the abuses in the monasteries and among the priests, but remained to the end a faithful servant of the Church. Like so many men of superior culture in all ages, Brant preferred to look backwards to a golden age rather than forwards into

[1] *Vorrede*, ll. 8 ff. (ll. 11 f., "Die nur mit Thorheit umgehen, wollen doch nicht den Namen (eines Narren) haben"; des (l. 13), "deshalb").

the new epoch on the brink of which he unconsciously stood. Nevertheless, he, too, like his humanistic friends, prepared the way for the Reformation.

Less to Renaissance influence than to the abiding influence of medieval tradition is to be ascribed the continued vitality of the "Spruch" poetry. "Reimsprecher" formed acknowledged guilds in the towns, and the poet who could recite an appropriate verse upon a public occasion stood higher in favour than his brother-poet who aimed at better things. The best representative of this literary *genre* was an Austrian, Peter Suchenwirth,[1] who, in the second half of the fourteenth century, was well known for his poems in honour of princes and noblemen. Suchenwirth belonged to the class of "Wappendichter," that is to say, poets familiar with heraldry, who wrote poetic descriptions of the arms of the nobility. In his verses, as in so much else that has been reviewed in this chapter, the transition of the age is vividly reflected, the passing of knighthood and the rise of the middle classes.

"Sprüche."

P. Suchenwirth.

The kind of extempore verse-making in which Suchenwirt excelled was also cultivated in Nürnberg in the fifteenth century. Here the particular representatives were Hans Rosenplüt, known as "the Schnepperer," who flourished about 1460, and Hans Folz, who lived some fifty years later. In the hands of these writers the extempore "Spruch" is fused with the anecdote or "Schwank"; with them begins that light, half-moralising method of relating all manner of anecdotes, stories, events of the day, which reached its highest point in the time of Hans Sachs. Rosenplüt and Folz were predecessors of Sachs, not only as Schwankdichter, but also as dramatists, for to them we owe, as will be seen in a later chapter, some of the earliest "Fastnachtsspiele" or Shrovetide Plays.

Hans Rosenplüt, ca. 1460.

Hans Folz, ca. 1510.

[1] Ed. A. Primisser, Vienna, 1827. Cp. F. Bobertag, *Erzahlende Dichtungen des spateren Mittelalters* (D.N.L., 10 [1887]), 95 ff.; and F. Vetter, *l.c.*, 1, 313 ff.

CHAPTER II.

MEISTERGESANG AND VOLKSLIED.

Minnesang and Meistergesang.

BETWEEN Minnesang and Meistergesang no hard and fast line can be drawn; the one passed slowly and gradually into the other, the chief Minnesingers, and, above all, Walther von der Vogelweide, being the acknowledged masters of the Meistersingers. Nor does the encroachment of the middle-class spirit aid materially in establishing a boundary between the two forms of poetry, for, as has been seen, this spirit is to be found in the best period of the Middle High German Minnesang; on the other hand, after the Meistergesang was firmly established, there were still singers of noble birth who kept alive the early traditions. At the turn of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, we meet with two noblemen, both of whom have left a large quantity of lyric poetry, which may be regarded as representing the last stage of the decaying Minnesang: Graf Hugo von Montfort (1357-1423) and Oswald von Wolkenstein (1367-1445).

Hugo von Montfort, 1357-1443.

In the poetry of Hugo von Montfort,[1] whose castle was situated near Bregenz in the Vorarlberg, the singleness of purpose which implies a fixed literary creed is missing; at one time we find him singing the praises of chivalry with the fervour of an old Minnesinger, at another his worldly life fills him with abject remorse. But through all his verse there runs a strain of melancholy, which makes his personality of interest to us even if what he has to say shows little originality. Much more important than Hugo von Montfort

[1] Ed. J. E. Wackernell, Innsbruck, 1881; cp. D.N.L., 8, 1, 267 ff., and 12, 1, 280 ff.

is Oswald von Wolkenstein,[1] a Tyrolese by birth, who lived a wild, adventurous life. As a lad of ten years of age, he had his first taste of war in the campaign of Albrecht III. of Austria against the Prussians, and for fifteen years he wandered about the world, serving many masters and fighting in many lands, from Russia to Spain, from Scotland to Persia. At the age of twenty-five he returned to the Tyrol, but there was little rest for him here; he fell in love, and, in compliance with his lady's wish, made a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. Hereupon followed more adventures, including imprisonment, and he was without any settled home until comparatively late in life. Oswald von Wolkenstein's poetry is as varied as was his career. There was no form of Middle High German lyric at which he did not try his hand; at one moment he pours out his love-sorrows in the strains of the Minnesang, at another he sinks to the coarsest tones of the degenerate "Dorfpoesie." Lines like the following are a pleasing echo of the Minnesang of the thirteenth century:—

Oswald von Wolkenstein, 1367-1445.

"O wuniklîcher wolgezierter may,
dein suess geschray
pringt freuden mangerlay,
besunderlîch wo zway
an ainem schœnen ray
sich mütiklîch verhendelt hân.
Grün ist der wald, perg, ow, gevild und tal;
die nachtigal
und aller voglîn schal
man hœret âne zal
erklingen uberal."[2]

Oswald von Wolkenstein was a man of wide knowledge; he knew many languages and had no small musical talent. He composed the melodies to his own songs, and in the use of rhymes and strophic forms shows an ingenuity which even the Meistersingers did not surpass; and again, he could not resist occasionally indulging, like the later Minne-

[1] Ed. B. Weber, Innsbruck, 1847; translations into modern German by J. Schrott, Stuttgart, 1886, and L. Passarge (in Reclam's *Univ. Bibl.*, 2830, 2840), Leipzig, 1891; cp. D.N.L., 8, 1, 273 ff.

[2] "O lieblicher, wohlgeschmückter Mai, dein süsses Geschrei bringt Freuden mancherlei, besonders wo zwei in einem schönen Reigen sich mit gutem Mute bei den Händen fassen. Grün ist der Wald, Berg, Aue, Feld und Thal; die Nachtigall und aller Vöglein Schall, zahllos hört man (sie) überall erklingen" (B. Weber's edition, 203, but cp. variants).

singers, in a display of learning and scientific lore. But his talent, although comprehensive, was deficient in delicacy; it is indeed a dramatic rather than a lyric talent, as may be seen in the preference he shows for the more dramatic forms of the lyric, such as the "Tagelied." In more cultured times he would possibly have found a truer outlet for his genius in the drama.

The Meistergesang.

The general characteristics of the German Meistergesang are clearly discernible in its earliest stages. It was, in the narrower sense of the word, an art, an artificial affair of laws and rules, and, being such, it could only be acquired by a special training: thus the Meistergesang was from the first associated with schools. The Meistersingers would have nothing to say to poets who, like the early representatives of the Middle High German lyric, were content to express themselves in simple measures. The day of an unshackled lyric poetry was clearly past. A pedantic display of learning, a love of incongruous imagery, complicated and often unpoetic strophic forms, a tendency to be guided by precedents handed down from earlier singers, and lastly, a highly developed combative spirit, a fondness for disputing and wrangling over unessential points—these characteristics cling to the Meistergesang throughout its entire history.

Singing Contests.

An essential feature in the schools of the Meistersingers was the Singing Contest. One poet was pitted, as it were, against another, and the competition decided by a judge, the so-called "Merker." Or, without even the excuse of a contest, one singer would attack his brother singer in the most defiant fashion and often in the most scurrilous language; the singer attacked replied, and so the fight proceeded. The oldest literary example of such a "Singing Contest" is the poem on the *Wartburgkrieg*,[1] which dates from about 1300, if it is not still older. The chief Minnesingers are represented as being assembled at the Court of the Landgraf Herman of Thuringia. A certain Heinrich von Ofterdingen challenges all comers by singing the praises of the Duke of Austria; he is prepared to defend him against any three other princes. Hereupon Walther von der Vogelweide praises the King of France; Reinmar von Zweter, "the Schreiber," and Wolfram von Eschenbach

Der Wartburgkrieg, ca. 1300.

[1] Ed. K. Simrock, Stuttgart, 1858.

champion the Landgraf of Thuringia. Heinrich von Ofterdingen is induced by Walther to compare his hero to the sun, whereupon the defenders of the Landgraf, with whom Walther now ranges himself, triumphantly prove that the day, to which they compare their hero, is greater than the sun. The remainder of the poem is taken up with a "riddle contest" between Wolfram and the magician, Klingsor von Ungerland, who, it will be remembered, was one of the figures in Wolfram's *Parzival*.

The last of the Minnesingers, and, more particularly, those that belonged to the burgher classes in the towns, were—as we have already seen—the founders of the Meistergesang; and as such may be regarded "the Marner," "the Frauenlob," the North German Meistersinger Regenbogen, and the learned Heinrich von Müglin,[1] who seems to have lived mainly at the Court of Charles IV. in Prague. The most important of these was Heinrich von Meissen, known as "the Frauenlob." He flourished about the turn of the thirteenth and fourteenth century, and, like the Spielleute, wandered from Court to Court, and from one end of Germany to the other. In his poetry we find the same characteristics as in that of the Marner. He loses no opportunity of displaying his learning; scholasticism, symbolism, and mysticism are mingled with his verses to a degree that often makes them incomprehensible; while astronomy, mathematics, and natural science are laid under tribute for his imagery. At other times his poetry suffers from an excessive ingenuity of form; he was the inventor of many new "tones" or melodies, which were accepted by his successors as models. On the whole, the Frauenlob is at his best when he sings the praises of homely virtues, above all, of friendship and chaste love; but the stamp of a decaying age is on the main body of his verse.[2] His name he probably owes to a "Leich" which he wrote in honour of the Virgin; and an old legend tells us that he was borne to his grave in the Cathedral of Mainz by women.

Heinrich von Meissen (Frauenlob), ca. 1250-1318.

In the fifteenth century, the chief representatives of the

[1] K. Bartsch, *Deutsche Liederdichter*, 179, 247, 283, 286; the Meistersingers themselves regarded their guild as having sprung from twelve founders amongst whom were Wolfram von Eschenbach and Walther von der Vogelweide.

[2] Ed. L. Ettmüller, Quedlinburg, 1843. Cp. K. Bartsch, *Deutsche Liederdichter*, 247 ff., and D.N.L., 8, 1, 234 ff.

Meistergesang were Muscatblut, whose lyrics have a theological tinge, and Michael Beheim (1416—ca. 1480).[1] The latter began life as a weaver, ultimately turning soldier and wandering Meistersinger; his verses have little real poetic inspiration, but they bear the stamp of the poet's extraordinarily varied experiences. The great age of the German Meistergesang was the sixteenth century, when the singing schools and guilds had reached their highest point of development. There is a tradition to the effect that the first of these schools was founded by Heinrich von Meissen in Mainz; however this may be, they are to be met with in the towns of the Rhineland as early as the close of the fifteenth century, and from the Rhineland they spread rapidly over South Germany. Early in the sixteenth century there was a school at Freiburg in the Breisgau, with marked religious and scholastic tendencies; a little later, other famous ones sprang up in Augsburg and Ulm, and in Nürnberg, Hans Folz, who came from Worms, established a school which, under Hans Sachs, soon became the most important of all. The aspirant to honours in these poetic and musical societies had first to place himself as "Schüler" under the tuition of a "Meister," who taught him the elaborate code of laws inscribed in the "Tabulatur." This learned, the scholar became, according to the Nürnberg nomenclature, a "Schulfreund." The next acquirement was to be able to sing at least four acknowledged "tones" or melodies, which entitled him to the rank of "Singer." A still higher honour, that of "Dichter," was attained by the composition of a new text to one of these tones, while the rank of "Meister" was only conferred on a poet who had invented a new tone. In the later schools the tones were designated by extraordinarily fantastic names. While, for instance, the early Meistersingers were content with simple terms like the *Marners Hofton*, the *Blüthenton Frauenlobs*, their successors in the sixteenth century described a new melody as a *Vielfrassweis*, *Gestreiftsafranblümleinweis*, *Schwarztintenweis*, or the like.[2]

The "Singschulen."

[1] Beheim's *Buch von den Wienern* (1462-65), ed. T. G. von Karajan, Vienna, 1843; cp. F. Bobertag, *Erzählende Dichtungen des späteren Mittelalters* (D.N.L., 10), 277 ff.

[2] Cp. O. Lyon, *Minne- und Meistersang*, Leipzig, 1882, 385 ff.; Adam Puschmann's *Gründlicher Bericht des deutschen Meistergesangs zusamt der Tabulatur*, &c. (1571), is reprinted as No. 73 of the *Neudrucke*, Halle, 1888.

The art of the Meistersingers was not favourable to the growth of genius, and when, as in the case of Hans Sachs, a real poet was nurtured in their school, it was virtually in spite of the training he received. The artistic barrenness of the Singing Schools and the lack of individual genius in their members were the real reasons of that slavery to tradition which hampered the development of the Meistergesang: it was the absence of inspiration, rather than any conscious respect for tradition, which made the Meistersingers go back to the founders of the guild for the laws and models of their poetry. At the same time, the indirect importance of the Meistergesang for the intellectual movement of the period cannot be overlooked. It represents, more perfectly than any other literary phenomenon, the awakening of the burgher classes to an interest in literature. From the soil provided by these literary guilds sprang, as will be seen in a subsequent chapter, the most promising growths of a new national literature; the schools created, above all, the conditions necessary for the development of the drama. The greatest of the Meistersingers, Hans Sachs, was not only a Meistersinger, but also the representative German dramatist of the sixteenth century.

The Volkslied.

Outside the Meistergesang flowed a great stream of primitive poetry which, even in the darkest ages of German literature, had never wholly ceased—the Volkslied.[1] And now, under the invigorating influence of the emancipated burgher classes, and of that spiritual freedom which preceded and accompanied the Reformation, the Volkslied entered upon a new stage of its history. Although, in all periods, one of the purest and least artificial forms in which the literary genius of the German people has expressed itself, the Volkslied seems in these particular centuries to have come, as never before or since, straight from the heart of the nation.

Historical ballads.

The most characteristic form of Volkslied in the period immediately preceding the Reformation was, perhaps, the historical ballad. Comparatively few historical Volkslieder have come down to us from the thirteenth century, but in the

[1] L. Uhland, *Alte hoch- und niederdeutsche Volkslieder* (1844-45), 3rd ed., 4 vols., Stuttgart, 1893; F. M. Böhme, *Altdeutsches Liederbuch*, Leipzig, 1877; R. von Liliencron, *Die historischen Volkslieder der Deutschen vom 13. bis zum 16. Jahrh.*, 4 vols. and supplement, Leipzig, 1865-69; also the same editor's *Deutsches Leben im Volkslied um* 1530 (D.N.L., 13 [1885]). Cp. the bibliography of the Volkslied by J. Meier in Paul's *Grundriss*, 2, 1, 750 ff.

fourteenth and fifteenth centuries they become more numerous. They are obviously a direct development of the Sprüche, by means of which the Spielleute provided the nation with news of current events in the middle ages. A spirited lay of this time tells of the famous battle of Sempach in Switzerland in 1386; another relates the battle of Näfels, where the Austrians were defeated by the Swiss in 1388; while from the following century we possess a number of Swiss ballads celebrating the national struggle with Charles the Bold. The historical Lied was not, however, restricted to Switzerland or South Germany. Two notorious pirates of the North Sea, Godeke Michael and Stortebecker, who, about 1400, harassed the commerce of the Hanse towns, until Hamburg ultimately took energetic steps towards their repression, were the subject of a long poem; another celebrated the achievements of Burggraf Friedrich Hohenzollern in the Mark of Brandenburg, at the beginning of the fifteenth century; while the Council of Constance, held in the second decade of that same century, was the theme of a long, almost epic, narrative of more than eighteen hundred lines. From the most trivial adventure of merely local interest to events of European importance, the news of the day was thrown into easy, pregnant verses, the more vivid because expressed in the terse speech of the people.

Ballads on popular sagas.

Nor were the stories of the heroic age forgotten: they now reappear in ballad-form, and occasionally represent a more primitive stage in the development of the saga than did the epics of the Middle High German period. *Koning Ermenrikes Dod* is the theme of a Low German Volkslied, and the lay of *Hildebrant* reappears in a version which avoids the tragic conclusion of the original: here, after a fierce conflict, father and son are reconciled. New sagas gradually formed round the memory of the poets of the thirteenth century. "Der edele Moringer" and Gottfried von Neifen are the chief figures in a romantic ballad of this period, and the poet Danhuser or Tanhäuser becomes the hero of the Venusberg saga. In the Hörselberg, near Eisenach, Frau Venus holds her court, at the entrance of which the "getreue Eckart" keeps watch. Ritter Tanhäuser has yielded to her allurements, and, now seized with remorse, makes a pilgrimage to Rome to obtain absolution from the Pope. "Ach bapst," he says—

"'Ach bapst, lieber herre mein!
ich klag euch hie mein sünde
die ich mein tag begangen hab
als ich euch will verkünden.

Ich bin gewesen auch ain jar
bei Venus ainer frawen,
nun wolt ich beicht und büss empfahn
ob ich möcht gott anschawen.'

Der bapst het ain steblin in seiner hand
und das was also durre:
'als wenig das steblin gronen mag
kumstu zu gottes hulde.'" [1]

The miracle happens, the staff becomes green, but too late to save the repentant sinner: he has returned to the Venusberg.

Love songs.

Love poetry, unhampered by rules or literary traditions, also sprang up anew in this period. The influence of the Minnesang is, it is true, occasionally noticeable in these love-songs of the people, but the artless, natural tone of the Volkslied predominates. There is nothing of the artificial varnish of either Court poetry or Meistergesang in verses like—

"Ach Elslein, liebes Elselein,
wie gern wär ich bei dir!
so sein zwei tiefe wasser
wol zwischen dir und mir.

Hoff', zeit werd es wol enden,
hoff, glück werd kummen drein,
sich in als guts verwenden,
herzliebstes Elselein!"

or again—

"Dört hoch auf jenem berge
da get ein mülerad,
das malet nichts denn liebe,
die nacht biss an den tag;

die müle ist zerbrochen,
die liebe hat ein end,
so gsegen dich got, mein feines lieb!
iez far ich ins ellend." [2]

The conflicts of storm and sunshine, of summer and winter, also reappear in the Volkslied; the childlike delight in the coming of spring recalls the "Minnesangs Frühling"; and here, too, as in the Minnesang, are to be found songs of longing, of

[1] L. Uhland, *l.c.*, 2, 126 f. (steblin, "Stäblein"; gronen, "grünen")
[2] L. Uhland, *l.c.*, 1, 72 and 63 (ins ellend, "in das Fremde").

Drinking songs.

parting, "Tagelieder" and "Tanzlieder." Intimately associated with the songs of the seasons were drinking songs and social songs. Hans Rosenplüt, the Nürnberg Schwankdichter, wrote a book of "Weingrüsse" and "Weinsegen."[1] A song like—

"Den liebsten bulen, den ich han,
der ist mit reifen bunden
und hat ein hölzes röcklein an
frischt kranken und gesunden :

Sein nam heisst Wein, schenk dapfer ein !
so wird die stimm bass klingen ;
ein starken trunk in einem funk
wil ich meim brudern bringen"[2]

reappears in several forms, and echoes through the crude anacreontic poetry of this period. "Landsknechte" sing of a free, careless life, and students glory in their "Burschenleben":—

"Du freies bursenleben !
ich lob dich für den gral,
got hat dir macht gegeben
trauren zu widerstreben
frisch wesen überal."[3]

The religious Lied.

The religious lyric naturally shared in the revival of popular song. Oswald von Wolkenstein and Michael Beheim left many hymns and religious poems, and biblical themes were favoured by the Meistersingers.[4] But the "geistliche Lied" or hymn had, from the earliest times, been a recognised form of the German Volkslied. The crusaders had their marching songs full of devout trust in God; sailors as well as soldiers had always expressed their faith in the Higher Power that guarded them, in terse vernacular verse which borrowed little from the Church hymn-book. At an early date, parts of the liturgy had been translated into the vernacular, or German verses had been substituted for the original text: from such versions of the *Kyrie eleison* arose, for instance, the so-called "Leisen." In the fourteenth cen-

[1] Ed. M. Haupt in *Altdeutsche Blätter*, 1, Leipzig, 1836, 401 ff.
[2] L. Uhland, *l.c.*, 2, 15 f. (bass, "besser"; funk, "Schluck").
[3] L. Uhland, *l.c.*, 2, 78 (gral, "Gral," *i.e.*, "der Ehre Höchstes").
[4] P. Wackernagel, *Das deutsche Kirchenlied* (5 vols., Leipzig, 1863-77), 2, 478 ff., 666 ff.

tury a monk, Herman or Johannes of Salzburg, had by this means helped to popularise the old Church poetry; and in the monasteries, the mystic trend in theology expressed itself now, as at the beginning of the Middle High German period, in a revival of "Marienlieder." Another favourite form of spiritual song consisted of religious parodies of familiar Volkslieder. "Der liebste bule, den ich han," became a devout expression of the soul's love for Jesus; "Es stet ein lind in jenem Tal" became "Es stet ein lind in himelrich." The most fertile composer of such hymns was Heinrich von Laufenberg, a monk of Freiburg in the Breisgau, who died in 1460: besides these religious Lieder he has also left two long allegorical poems, *Der Spiegel des menschlichen Heils* (1437) and *Das Buch von den Figuren* (1441), in which the mystic tendencies of the fifteenth century find characteristic expression.

Heinrich von Laufenberg.

The majority of the Volkslieder in the centuries preceding the Reformation were handed down by oral tradition. Only rarely—as when in 1471 Klara Hätzlerin,[1] a nun of Augsburg, made a collection of them—were they committed to writing. The Volkslied of these centuries was thus not confined to any particular class; all classes and professions had a share in modelling the verses or the melodies of the songs: they were, as Herder first set forth centuries later in his *Von deutscher Art und Kunst*, the voice of the whole nation. As one generation of poets after another has felt, the Volkslied is the spring to which the German lyric must turn, to cleanse itself from the dust of a purely literary or bookish tradition.

[1] Ed. C. Haltaus, Quedlinburg, 1840.

CHAPTER III.

MYSTICISM AND HUMANISM; THE REFORMATION.

THE fourteenth and fifteenth centuries present certain points of resemblance to the tenth and eleventh, in so far as they were both periods of depression and of unconscious preparation for the future. The wave of religious fervour which swept across Europe, as a result of the monastic reforms of the tenth century, may be compared with the deepening of religious life due to the Dominicans and Franciscans of the pre-Reformation centuries. And like the earlier movement, this later religious revival, which took the form of mysticism, spread from Western Germany. Traces of mysticism are to be found, as we have already seen, in the sermons of the thirteenth century, in those of David of Augsburg and Berthold of Regensburg, but the line of German mystics proper commences with the Dominican Eckhart (ca. 1260-1327),[1] who, in the early years of the fourteenth century, preached in Strassburg—where he was probably born—and in Cologne; in Eckhart's footsteps followed Heinrich Seuse or Suso (1295-1366) and Johannes Tauler (ca. 1300-61).[2] Meister Eckhart, the most gifted and original of all the German mystics, established once and for all the philosophical basis for mysticism: in his writings is to be found that anxious searching into the relations of the soul with God, that conception of God's oneness with the universe, which runs through the whole later development of the movement in Germany. Heinrich Seuse, who was a Swiss, represented the fervid and poetic side of mysticism: he ap-

Meister Eckhart, ca. 1260-1327.

Heinrich Seuse, 1295-1366.

[1] F. Pfeiffer, *Deutsche Mystiker des 14. Jahrhunderts*, 2, Leipzig, 1857. Cp. F. Preger, *Geschichte der deutschen Mystik im Mittelalter*, Leipzig, 1874-93, 1, 309 ff.

[2] For Seuse and Tauler, cp. F. Preger, *l.c.*, 2, 309 ff. and 3, 3 ff.

pealed to the imagination rather than to the purely religious sentiments of his hearers. The Strassburg preacher Tauler, on the other hand, was a mystic of a manlier type. He, too, preached the complete union of the soul with God, but he avoided Eckhart's pantheism. He was essentially of a practical nature and had little faith in outward ceremonies; he believed that the path to the higher religious life led only through personal conversion and the communion of the soul with God. For centuries, Tauler's sermons were favourite religious books with the German people.

Johannes Tauler, ca. 1300-61.

Mysticism, in so far as it was a revival of religious individualism, was thus a forerunner of the Reformation. The history of literature is, however, more intimately concerned with another aspect of the movement, an aspect in which the aims of Protestantism were no less distinctly foreshadowed. To the mystics we owe the first complete German Bible, a translation of the Vulgate, which was printed at Strassburg in 1466. Until this translation was superseded, a generation later, by Luther's work, it was reprinted no less than thirteen times. And, in addition to the printed version, there existed several manuscript translations of the whole Bible, or part of it, the majority of which are also to be ascribed to the influence of this religious movement.

The first German Bible, 1466.

In the fifteenth century mysticism had lost something of its unworldly enthusiasm, and in its place had appeared a practical religious spirit, but a spirit that was even less tolerant of abuses and superficial thinking. The representative preacher of this century—as Tauler had been of the preceding one—was Johann Geiler of Kaisersberg (1445-1510).[1] The scene of Geiler's activity was again Strassburg. Like his contemporary and friend, Sebastian Brant, Geiler had received the best part of his education from the humanists, and this to some extent explains the difference between him and his predecessors. Geiler was more of a satirist; there is less mysticism in his sermons and more practical common-sense. He, too, like Tauler, preached the necessity of an essentially personal relationship between the soul and God, but his eyes were more open to ecclesiastical abuses.

Johann Geiler of Kaisersberg, 1445-1510.

[1] L. Dacheux, *Jean Geiler de Kaisersberg, un réformateur catholique à la fin du XVe siècle*, Paris, 1876. Selections from his writings, ed. by P. de Lorenzi, 4 vols., Trèves, 1881-83.

The most famous collection of his sermons, *Das Narrenschiff* (1511, in Latin; translated nine years later by J. Pauli), takes the form of a spiritual exegesis of Brant's poem. On the religious life of his time Geiler's influence was hardly less widespread than that of Tauler.

But mysticism was not the only sign of the times. Another factor in the life of these centuries had an equally important share in preparing the ground for the Reformation—namely, humanism, which began, as far as Germany was concerned, with the foundation of the University of Prague in 1347. The chief importance of humanism for Germany lay in the fact that it gave the national life a cosmopolitan character. The use of the Latin tongue, the intercourse between German scholars and the leading Italian humanists, rapidly widened the intellectual horizon of Northern Europe. The translation of Latin and Italian literature received a fresh impetus. Between 1461 and 1478 Niklas von Wyl, Chancellor of Würtemberg, produced *Translationen* of Enea Silvio, Poggio, Petrarch, and other humanists;[1] and shortly after the middle of the century a certain Arigo, who, with considerable probability, has been identified as Heinrich Leubing of Nürnberg (ca. 1400-72),[2] translated Boccaccio's *Decamerone* and another Italian book, *Fiore di Virtù* (*Blumen der Tugend*). Albrecht von Eyb (1420-75), a native of Franconia, who had studied in Italy, wrote in good popular German a still readable *Ehestandsbuch* (1472)[3] on the theme, "ob eim manne sei zu nemen ein elich weibe oder nit," and a *Spiegel der Sitten* (1474; printed 1511), which is inspired by the liberal ideas of the Italian Renaissance. The same writer also translated the *Menaechmi* and *Bacchides* of Plautus, which he appended to the *Sittenspiegel*. But, with the humanists as with the monks of earlier centuries, Terence was the more popular of the Roman dramatists; the first complete German Terence appeared in 1499, and translations of other Latin and Greek classics were not long in following.

Humanism.

Translations from Latin and Italian.

The literature of humanism.

The original humanistic literature of the fourteenth and

[1] Ed. A. von Keller (Stuttg. Litt. Ver., 57), 1861.

[2] Cp. K. Drescher, *Arigo, eine Untersuchung* (*Quellen und Forschungen*, 86), Strassburg, 1900. The *Decameron*, ed. A. von Keller (Stuttg. Litt. Ver., 51), 1860.

[3] Ed. M. Herrmann, Berlin, 1890. Cp. M. Herrmann, *A. von Eyb und die Frühzeit des deutschen Humanismus*, Berlin, 1893.

fifteenth centuries, however, was and remained Latin—Latin not only in language but in spirit. This makes it even less appropriate, in a history of German literature, to discuss the humanists than it was to take account of the Latin poets of the Ottonian Renaissance, where often only the language was foreign. The humanists, from their earliest representatives, Peter Luder, who died about 1474, and Konrad Celtes (1459-1508) onwards, took a pride in holding aloof from the vernacular literature. Thus as a literary influence, humanism had its dark side; it saddled the German tongue with a prejudice which did not disappear until late in the eighteenth century. On the other hand, German scholarship and German universities rose upon the tide of humanistic cosmopolitism, and were soon in a position to rival successfully those of Italy and France. And although the spirit of the humanistic literature was Latin, the humanists themselves were by no means devoid of patriotism; the Alsatian, Jakob Wimpfeling (1450-1528), wrote an *Epitoma rerum Germanicarum usque ad nostra tempora* (1505), which may be regarded as the first historical work produced in Germany, and Konrad Celtes, Wilibald Pirckheimer, Franciscus Irenicus, and Konrad Peutinger, all occupied themselves at one time or another with the past history of their country.

J. Wimpfeling, 1450-1528.

In northern Europe, the humanistic movement reached its culmination at the beginning of the sixteenth century, in Desiderius Erasmus of Rotterdam (1466-1536) and his hardly less famous contemporary, Johannes Reuchlin of Pforzheim (1455-1522).[1] Both men were in a measure forerunners of the Reformation, but they were essentially scholars, not reformers. They fought against the abuses of Catholicism, but with the weapons of philosophy and learning; their satire was purely intellectual. The *Enchiridion militis christiani* ("Manual of the Christian Soldier," 1509) and *Moriæ Encomium* ("Praise of Folly," 1509) of Erasmus were world-famous books, but they are written from the superior standpoint of the scholar: they did not come, as it were, from the heart of the nation like the writings of Luther a few years later. The foundation

D. Erasmus, 1466-1536, and J. Reuchlin, 1455-1522.

[1] Cp. E. Emerton, *Desiderius Erasmus of Rotterdam*, New York, 1899; L. Geiger, *Johann Reuchlin*, Leipzig, 1871. The *Epistolæ obscurorum virorum* are edited by E. Böcking in the supplement to his edition of Hutten, 2 vols., Leipzig, 1864-70.

of a direct, face-to-face knowledge of the Bible was first laid by Erasmus in his edition of the Greek Testament, to which he appended a Latin translation (1516), and by Reuchlin who, in 1506 and 1518, published handbooks for the study of Hebrew. Reuchlin's Hebrew grammar was the occasion of one of the bitterest theological conflicts of pre-Reformation times. He was accused of undue sympathy for the Jews, and the theological world rose in arms against him. The humanists, however, took his part, and it was soon evident that they possessed the more effective weapons. In 1514 Reuchlin was able to publish the *Epistolæ clarorum virorum*, in which the greatest men of his time expressed their sympathy with his cause; and in the following year appeared, as an ostensible reply, the first series of the anonymous *Epistolæ obscurorum virorum* (1515-17). The clerical party was at first baffled by this remarkable collection of letters from all manner of fantastically named Churchmen; in appearance it was an attack upon their opponents. But soon it became evident to every one that the letters were in reality a humanistic satire upon the Church party. The *Epistolæ obscurorum virorum* are, indeed, one of the most bitter and powerful satires in the literature of these centuries, and they won the first battle in the cause of the Reformation. The authorship is still a matter of uncertainty, but a certain Johann Jäger (Crotus Rubianus; ca. 1480-1540) of Dornheim seems to have had the chief share in the book, and a considerable number of letters were contributed by Ulrich von Hutten.

The *Epistolæ obscurorum virorum*, 1517.

On the 31st of October 1517 a monk of Wittenberg nailed upon the door of the Schlosskirche in that town ninety-five *Thesen wider den Ablass*. The hour had come at last—and the man. What mysticism and humanism had failed to achieve, was conceived and carried out by Martin Luther.[1] Born of poor parents in the little Thuringian town of Eisleben, on the 10th of November 1483, Luther had been educated in the school of the humanists, and from mysticism he had learned that the soul may hold direct intercourse with God.

Martin Luther, 1483-1546.

[1] A standard edition of Luther's works, of which 18 vols. have appeared, is being published at Weimar, 1883 ff.; selections of literary interest edited by K. Goedeke (*Deutsche Dichter des 16. Jahrh.*, 18), Leipzig, 1883, and E. Wolff (D.N.L., 15 [1892]). Cp. J. Köstlin, *Martin Luther, sein Leben und seine Schriften*, 4th ed., 2 vols., Berlin, 1889; T. Kolde, *Martin Luther*, 2 vols., Gotha, 1884-93.

But his broad virile humanity shrank from learned subtleties and scholastic exclusiveness, and, unlike the mystics, he was not dreamer enough to be satisfied with a spiritual kingdom within while abuses raged without.

Luther in Wittenberg.

In 1512, after a journey to Rome, Luther was made Doctor of Theology in the University of Wittenberg, and in 1517, as we have seen, commenced his attack on the abuse of indulgences. Repentance, he proclaimed, was an inward process of the soul, and could not be sold by the Church. Three years later followed his flaming appeal *An den Christlichen Adel deutscher Nation: von des Christlichen standes besserung*, the Latin tract *De captivitate Babylonica ecclesiæ* ("The Babylonian Captivity of the Church"), and finally—as a reply to the excommunication of the Pope—*Von der Freyheyt eyniss Christen menschen*.[1] These are the three great documents of the Protestant Reformation. Firmly established on the rock of the Bible, Luther thunders forth his attack upon the sovereignty of the Papacy, his insistence on the supremacy of the German Kaiser, his triumphant demand that the Bible, and the Bible alone, shall be law to every Christian. He calls for a new Council to reform the abuses of the Church, to sweep from German soil the network of hypocrisy and vice in which foreigners had entangled the nation's spiritual life. He will have no more vows and no monastic prisons; no more festivals for saints, no pious pilgrimages; no further inquisitional measures against heretics. Education, above all things, is to be reformed; in place of religious orders, free Christian schools are to be founded, and the scholastic methods swept away with the cobwebs of the old theology. There have perhaps been loftier and grander schemes of human reform both before and after Luther, but never did a scheme so magnificently practical, a scheme that was realisable to the last letter, spring from the brain of a single man. Luther was, above all things, a man of supreme common-sense; he looked the world straight in the face, saw life in all its littleness as well as greatness, but never lost faith in its possibilities. His sincerity, too, was unimpeachable; in his nature, as in that of the ideal knights of the middle ages, there was no room for *valsch*.

[1] Reprints of *An den Christlichen Adel* and *Von der Freyheyt eyniss Christen menschen* in the Halle *Neudrucke*, 4 (2nd ed., 1897) and 18 (1879).

The time was, indeed, ripe, but the greatness of Luther's work must not on that account be underestimated. It is not to be forgotten that in these, the first battles of the Reformation, Luther fought single-handed; his scheme of reform was conceived and carried out by himself alone. On the heels of his first appeal followed tract upon tract, in which he laid down, with the unbending conviction of a dictator, the tenets of the new faith. He stood amidst the storms that raged round his head, like the hero of an old Germanic epic, until the culminating-point was reached in the supreme moment at the Council of Worms, when he refused before Emperor and Empire to recant his faith: "Hier stehe ich, ich kann nicht anders. Gott helfe mir! Amen." This was on the 18th of April 1521. Then followed some months of concealment in the Wartburg as "Junker Georg," a willing prisoner of the Saxon Elector. In these months Luther began his greatest literary work, the translation of the Bible into German. The New Testament appeared in 1522, the whole Bible in 1534. In 1522 he was able to return to Wittenberg, where, with increased zeal, he continued the work of the Reformation. In 1525 he married a former nun, Katharina von Bora, and for the next twenty years lived mainly in Wittenberg, engaged with restless, unwearied activity in the organisation of the new faith and the new Church. His death took place during a visit to his native town, in 1546.

Luther's Bible, 1522-34.

The importance of Luther's Bible cannot be too highly estimated, either as the text-book of Reformed Christianity or as a literary monument. His original works hardly bear, one might say, so strong an impress of his magnificent personality as this German Bible. For it was, above all things, a *German* Bible. Although he went back to the original Hebrew and Greek texts, Luther made no slavish translation; he gave the German people a truer "Volksbuch" than did his scholarly predecessors, who, in their translations of the Vulgate, aimed at closer accuracy. The language of Luther's Bible is German—living, whole-hearted, humorous, German; it is written as few books have been written, in the unadulterated language of the people. Just as the Old Saxon singer of the *Heliand* adapted the story of Christ to the life and ideas of the ninth century, so, no less, has

Luther Germanised his translation. He has rendered the concrete Hebrew poetry and lucid Greek narrative by the pithy language and the proverbial phrases of the peasant's home.

"Ich weis wol," writes Luther in his Letter *Vom Dolmetschen* (1530), "was für kunst, vleis, vernunfft, verstand zum guten Dolmetscher gehöret. . . . Man mus nicht die buchstaben in der Lateinischen sprachen fragen, wie man sol Deudsch reden, Sondern man mus die Mutter im hause, die Kinder auff der gassen, den gemeinen Man auff dem marckt drumb fragen, vnd denselbigen auff das Maul sehen, wie sie reden, vnd darnach dolmetschen, So verstehen sie es denn vnd mercken, das man Deudsch mit jnen redet. . . . So wil ich auch sagen, Du holdselige Maria, du liebe Maria, Vnd lasse sie [*i.e.*, die Papisten] sagen, Du vol gnaden Maria. Wer Deudsch kan, der weis wol, welch ein hertzlich fein wort das ist, Die liebe Maria, der liebe Gott, der liebe Keiser, der liebe Fürst, der liebe Man, das liebe Kind. Vnd ich weis nicht, ob man das wort liebe, auch so hertzlich vnd gnugsam in Lateinischer oder andern sprachen reden müge, das also dringe vnd klinge ins hertz, durch alle sinne, wie es thut in vnser Sprache."[1]

He was able, however, to cope with his original in more than language; he himself had felt the wrath of Jehovah, and the holy faith in Christ's mission glowed in his heart no less fiercely than in the hearts of the first disciples. The Bible was thus for him not merely a historical record of his faith; it was, from first word to last, the living Word of God. In interpreting it, he did not feel the necessity of putting himself in the position of a Jew or an early Christian; he regarded it as a book appealing directly and immediately to the German burgher of the sixteenth century. It is here that the secret of Luther's genius as a translator lies. One might say, indeed, that his Bible is the final triumph of the modern middle-class spirit over the aristocratic spirit of medieval literature.

The language of Luther's Bible.

Thus, in the best sense, Luther's translation of the Bible is a work of creative genius, the greatest German book produced within a period extending over at least three centuries. No other work has played so important a *rôle* in the history of the language as this Bible, for it gave the nation a normal language in place of the many dialects that had been in use for literary purposes during the preceding centuries.

[1] Jena edition of Luther's *Bücher vnd Schrifften*, 5 (1557), 162 ff.

"Ich hab," said Luther in one of his *Tischreden*, "keine gewisse, sonderliche, eigene Sprach im Teutschen, sondern brauche der gemeinen Teutschen Sprach, dass mich beyde, Ober und Niderländer verstehen mögen."[1] Luther's German was virtually the language of the Saxon "Kanzlei" or Chancery. Even before his translation, the various German States in their communications with one another had felt the need of a uniform dialect, and the Chancery of Vienna had attempted a linguistic compromise with the Chanceries of North Germany. But, as a consequence of Luther's favouring the official language of the Electorate of Saxony, that dialect soon gained the upper hand and became the literary language of the German-speaking world.

Luther caught the popular tone as perfectly in his verse as in his prose; he not only gave Protestant Germany its Bible, but also its evangelical hymn-book. His *Geistliche Lieder*, of which the first collection appeared in 1524, are in the best sense popular; their straightforward, simple language, their intense earnestness and heart-felt piety, make them masterpieces of hymnal poetry. Hymns such as—

Geistliche Lieder, 1524.

"Vom himel hoch da kom ich her,
ich bring euch gute newe mehr,
Der guten mehr bring ich so viel,
davon ich singen vnd sagen wil.

Euch ist ein kindlein heut geborn,
von einer jungfraw auserkorn,
Ein kindelein so zart vnd fein:
Das sol ewr freud vnd wonne sein,"

or the magnificent pæan of Reformation—

"Ein feste burg ist vnser Gott,
ein gute wehr vnd waffen,
Er hilfft vnns frey aus aller not,
die vns ytzt hat betroffen.

Der alt böse feind
mit ernst ers ytzt meint,
gros macht vnd viel list
sein grausam rüstung ist,
auff erd ist nicht seins gleichen."[2]

are the inspired utterances of a true poet, but they are, at the same time, the spiritual Volkslieder of the nation. Although

[1] *Tischreden*, Kap. 69.
[2] P. Wackernagel, *Das deutsche Kirchenlied*, 3, 20 and 23.

between the appearance of the *Geistlichen Lieder* in 1524 and the end of the sixteenth century, a vast literature of Church song sprang up under Luther's inspiration, the peculiar excellence of his hymns was never surpassed. Other hymn-writers caught the tone of the Volkslied as he had done, many of them wrote more musical verses, but the general tendency of the later Protestant hymn was towards a less simple expression of faith, towards a glorification of dogmatic principles.

Tischreden, 1566.

The great Reformer is seen from another and more personal side in the intimacy of his letters, and especially in his *Tischreden* (collected 1566). Again, it is Luther's magnificent personality that here confronts us. Straightforward, honest simplicity, that combination of naïveté of mind with strength of will and indomitable conviction, which is to be observed in so many of the leading geniuses of the Germanic races—these are the characteristics that speak out of every page of the *Tischreden*. There are times, it must be admitted, when Luther's bluntness offends, when we have more sympathy for the calm, philosophic ideals of the humanists than for the doctrines of this iconoclast who broke down the old faith with barbaric ruthlessness. Even Luther's theological principles and dogmas smack sometimes more of medieval thraldom and intolerance than of the freedom we now associate with Protestantism. But, when we consider the issues at stake and the conditions of the age, it is clear that the only possible champion was a man like Luther: without his strong, brutal doggedness, the Reformation would have been no more lasting in its effects than had been the many would-be Reformations before it.

Ulrich von Hutten, 1488-1523.

Of his fellow-fighters only one has a place in the history of literature, the Franconian knight Ulrich von Hutten (1488-1523).[1] In some respects Hutten may be said to have supplemented Luther's work. A popular reformer he was not; he is rather to be described as a combination of humanist and Protestant. But what he lacked as a religious fighter he made up for as a patriot: while Luther fought for religious reform, Hutten dreamed of intellectual and political freedom. Moreover, it was not until Luther questioned

[1] Cp. D. Strauss, *Ulrich von Hutten*, 2 vols. 4th ed., Bonn, 1878; Hutten's works are edited by E. Böcking, 7 vols., Leipzig, 1859-70. Selections from his *Deutsche Schriften*, ed. G. Balke (D.N.L., 17, 2 [1891]), 201 ff.

the supremacy of Rome that Hutten realised they had anything in common, that the causes for which they were fighting were but two sides of the same thing. Hutten's literary work—his best writings are in Latin—is of a less simple and popular kind than Luther's; it has the polish of the scholarly humanist and betrays the writer who had been exclusively schooled in Latin culture. When, however, he writes verse, he forgets that he is a humanist; his German poems, such as the *Clag vnd vormanung gegen dem übermässigen vnchristlichen gewalt des Bapsts zu Rom, vnd der vngeistlichen geistlichen* (1521), the well-known *Lied* (1521)—

His German writings.

> "Ich habs gewagt mit sinnen
> vnd trag des noch kain rew,
> mag ich nit dran gewinnen,
> noch muss man spüren trew"[1]—

and the verses scattered through his German prose works, are written in a thoroughly popular style and in a rhythm that suggests the Volkslied. Of Hutten's various theological writings, which were either originally written in German or translated by himself from his own Latin originals, the most important are the four dialogues entitled *Feber das Erst*, *Feber das Ander*, *Wadiscus oder die Römische Dreyfaltigkeyt*, and *Die Anschawenden*, which together form the *Gespräch büchlin* published at Strassburg in 1521.

While Luther saw his dreams realised, Ulrich von Hutten was a disappointed man. He had set his heart upon a national uprising against the Pope, headed by a free knight like Franz von Sickingen; but it soon became clear that little was to be hoped for in this direction. Broken in health, Hutten was forced to flee before his enemies; Zwingli offered him a refuge on the island of Ufnau in the Lake of Zurich, and here he died in 1523. If we except Hutten and perhaps Melanchthon (Philipp Schwarzerd, 1497-1560)—also, like Hutten, a link between humanism and Protestantism—the German humanists held aloof from the Reformation. To assume a conservative attitude in questions of reform lay in the nature of humanism; and it shrank from the coarseness inevitable in a movement which affected not merely the educated and cultured classes, but all ranks

P. Melanchthon, 1497-1560.

[1] P. Wackernagel, *l.c.*, 3, 386 (sinnen, "Absicht und Überlegung").

of the nation. The scholars and poets of the time—notwithstanding the liberal nature of their personal views—were indeed often more inclined to side with Luther's enemies, and it is significant that one of the most gifted of these, the Catholic monk Thomas Murner, had been educated by the humanists.

Thomas Murner, 1475-1537.

Murner was probably born at Oberehnheim in Alsace, in 1475; his youth was spent in Strassburg, where in 1491 he became a Franciscan monk. Unsettled years followed, when we find him either as student or as teacher in several of the chief European universities. He died in his native village in 1537. Attention was first drawn to Murner by his attack on Wimpfeling's *Germania* (1501), to which he opposed a *Germania nova* (1502),[1] claiming Alsace for France, instead of, as Wimpfeling had done, for Germany. But neither this book nor his translation of *Vergilij dryzehen Aeneadischen Bücher* (1515) gave Murner an opportunity to be satirical, and it was in satire that his genius first revealed itself. As a preacher, he had early gained a reputation for that ironical, witty style of pulpit-oratory which Geiler cultivated, but his more immediate model was Sebastian Brant. The influence of both Geiler and Brant may be traced in the two satires *Die Narren beschweerung* and *Die Schelmen zunfft* (1512), and in the allegory *Ein andechtig geistliche Badenfart* (1514),[2] the works with which Murner began his career. The similarity of these poems to Brant's *Narrenschiff* is not to be overlooked; and Murner's method is, in its general lines, identical with Brant's. But while the latter never forgot that he was a scholar, Murner struck the coarsest popular note; Brant had some sense of literary dignity; Murner had none. On the other hand, Murner's verses came more spontaneously; his thrusts never missed their mark, and left wounds behind them that rankled.

Die Geuchmat, 1519.

In his next writings, *Die Mülle von Schwyndelssheym vnd Gredt Müllerin Jarzeit* (1515) and *Die Geuchmat* (1519),[3]

[1] Both works edited together by K. Schmidt, Geneva, 1875. Cp. E. Martin's translation of Wimpfeling's *Germania*, Strassburg, 1885.

[2] The *Badenfart* ed. E. Martin, Strassburg, 1887; the other two satires in the *Neudrucke*, 85 and 119-124, Halle, 1890-94; *Die Narrenbeschwörung*, also edited by K. Goedeke (*Deutsche Dichter des* 16. *Jahrh.*, 11), Leipzig, 1879. Cp. G. Balke, *l.c.*, 17, 1 ff. and 59 ff.

[3] Edited respectively by P. Albrecht (*Strassburger Studien*, 2, 1), 1883, and W. Uhl, Leipzig, 1896.

Murner goes further in unscrupulousness, in coarseness, and vulgarity. Here, again, his theme is the favourite butt of satire in the age of the Reformation, the "Narr," and in the *Geuchmat*—the "fools' meadow"—he expends all his bitterness upon the "fool of love." These poems are hardly readable to-day, but, in judging them, allowance must be made for the virile age in which they were written. There is never a smile behind the mask of this misogynous monk; no class of society, not even his own order, escapes the bitterness of his gall. In fact, as a satirist of monkish corruption, Murner was of more assistance to the cause of the Reformation than even Brant had been. But he was of too negative a nature to see good in anything that savoured of reform; he wholly mistrusted any change that went beyond the removal of abuses within the Church, and his own sympathies were too deeply rooted in the old *régime* for him to look with favour on the new. Above all, he resented interference on the part of the laity. In the earliest stages of the Reformation he was at one with the Reformers, but they soon seemed to him to out-step reasonable limits; he made almost pathetic appeals to them to leave, if not the saints, at least the Virgin, untouched; he championed the Catholic hierarchy as one might imagine a knight of the fifteenth century championing the sinking world of chivalry. But before long he saw that such appeals were of little avail, and he took up his old weapon again. In 1522 he produced the wittiest and bitterest of all his satires, *Von dem grossen Lutherischen Narren wie in doctor Murner beschworen hat.*[1] Although gross as only Murner could be, and unscrupulous in his personalities against Luther and his fellow-fighters, Murner is here once more master of his art. The "grosse Narr" whom he conjures up is the Reformation, and the Narr contains within him a multitude of lesser Narren who, under Luther's leadership, attack Christianity and plunder Church and monastery. Ultimately, Murner—who is represented in the woodcuts accompanying the poem as a cat ("der Murner") in a monk's cowl—succeeds in staying the work of destruction, and Luther attempts to win him over to his side by giving him his daughter in marriage. Murner, however, discovers that she

Von dem grossen Lutherischen Narren, 1522.

[1] Reprinted in D.N.L., 17, 2, 1 ff.

has a loathsome disease, and turns her out of his house. Luther, mortally insulted by this affront, dies, and with him dies the great fool, the Reformation. Never has a national movement been attacked with such venom as in *Von dem grossen Lutherischen Narren;* if it had lain in the power of any man to make the Reformation ridiculous, that man was Murner.

On the Protestant side, there was no writer whose genius could in any way be compared with Murner's. The Swiss dramatist, Niklaus Manuel (1484-1530), who will be discussed in the following chapter, was, as a satirist, perhaps the most gifted, but he was not in a position to play an effective *rôle* in the religious conflicts of the time. On the other hand, Erasmus Alberus (ca. 1500-53), who was born at Sprendlingen, near Frankfort, was an intimate friend of Luther and Melanchthon and shared in their hottest battles. His most important work, *Der Barfüsser Munche Eulenspiegel vnd Alcoran*, a satire on the Catholic worship of saints, appeared, with a preface by Luther, in 1542, and the collection of satirical fables, *Das Buch von der Tugent vnd Weissheit*—which has been already referred to—in 1550. These were, on the whole, the sharpest literary weapons which the reformers had at their command.

Erasmus Alberus, ca. 1500-53.

CHAPTER IV.

THE REFORMATION DRAMA.

THROUGHOUT the middle ages, the drama, as we have seen, was merely an adjunct of the Church, an extension of the ritual, in which the imagination had more or less play. But, with every succeeding century, the Mysteries grew in elaboration and importance; secular elements were introduced, and the language of the people gradually took the place of Latin. It was not, however, until nearly the close of the sixteenth century that the German religious dramas of this class reached the highest point of their development in the elaborate "Osterspiele," performed in the Weinmarkt of Lucerne.[1] The beginnings of a serious drama of a more secular nature are to be seen in the Low German play *Theophilus* of the fourteenth century, and the *Spiel von Fraw Jutten*, written in 1480 by Theodor Schernberk, a priest of Mülhausen.[2] Both dramas are forerunners of the Reformation *Faust;* both represent the tragedy of man's temptation by the evil powers, and his fall. Theophilus sells his soul to the devil in order to attain worldly distinction; "Frau Jutta of England" is tempted by the powers of evil to pass herself off as a man. She studies in Paris, and in Rome rises to high ecclesiastical honours, being ultimately chosen Pope under the name of Johannes VIII.; but the devils who have tempted her also bring about her fall; her sex is discovered, and she only escapes perdition by taking upon herself the shame of the world. The

Theophilus and *Fraw Jutten.*

[1] Cp. F. Leibing, *Die Inscenierung des zweitägigen Luzerner Osterspieles vom Jahre* 1583 *durch Renwart Cysat*, Elberfeld, 1869.

[2] *Theophilus*, ed. Hoffmann von Fallersleben, Hannover, 1853-54; *Fraw Jutten* in A. von Keller's *Fastnachtspiele aus dem* 15. *Jahrh.* 2, 900 ff.

earliest stages of a purely secular comedy are to be found in the rough "Fastnachtsspiele" or Shrovetide plays which became popular in Nürnberg in the latter part of the fifteenth century. The "Fastnachtsspiel," like the "Narren" literature of the age, was a natural outcome of the amusements of the carnival. The wearing of a mask was, in itself, the first step towards dramatic representation, and in the "Schembartlauf" (*i.e.*, "Maskenlauf"), organised every year by the butchers and cutlers of Nürnberg, from about the middle of the fourteenth century to the time of Hans Sachs, there were many dramatic elements; amongst other things, the "Schembartläufer" represented symbolically the conflict of spring and winter, a conflict to which the drama in all literatures seems ultimately to lead back. The next step, namely, to accompany these representations by dialogue, or to perform comic scenes of everyday life, was the more easy, for such scenes had already been introduced, as episodes, in the religious drama. In this way arose the Fastnachtsspiel, which, in its earliest stages, as cultivated by Hans Rosenplüt and Hans Folz, was little more than a comic dialogue.[1]

The "Fastnachtsspiel."

Although the drama had thus, at the beginning of the sixteenth century, only begun to emerge as a literary form, no branch of literature responded more quickly to the stimulus of the Reformation; under its influence, dramatic literature developed with an extraordinary energy, as if to make up for the centuries in which it had lain dormant. There was at this epoch every promise that Germany would soon produce a national drama not inferior to that of Spain or England; but in the following centuries, the age when this promise might have been realised, the land was devastated by a catastrophe hardly less appalling and demoralising than the migrations of early Germanic times—the Thirty Years' War. The novel, the satire, the lyric—such literary forms were possible amidst the political confusion of the seventeenth century, even if they could not flourish; but the drama cannot exist in an era of social disintegration, and the dramatic beginnings of the sixteenth century, instead of being a prelude to something better, received a check which made further development impossible for a time.

Influence of the Reformation on the drama.

[1] A. von Keller, *Fastnachtspiele aus dem 15. Jahrh.* (Stuttg. Litt. Ver., 28-30, 46), 1853-58.

The Reformation drama[1] was not, however, an actual product of the Reformation. The medium from which it sprang was formed, on the one hand, by humanism, and on the other, by the free burgher spirit. In other words, although the drama of this period drew its chief nourishment from the Reformation, in its first stages it was a product of causes similar to those which brought about the Reformation, and not an immediate result of the Reformation itself. The influence which the humanists exerted on the drama was, in the first instance, due to their revival of Latin comedy. Terence, whose works had been read steadily throughout the middle ages, became still more popular, the performance of his pieces being a favourite method of instruction in Latin. Even public performances were instituted by the schools, on which occasions, prologues in German acquainted the audience with the subject of the plays. And, as has already been noted, a complete translation of Terence was published in 1499. Plautus stood in almost as high favour as Terence, and from Plautus to original plays in imitation of the Latin comedy, the step was a small one. In 1470, Wimpfeling's *Stylpho*,[2] the first School Comedy by a German, was produced at Heidelberg; in 1498, Reuchlin published his *Scenica Progymnasmata* or *Henno*, a witty Latin farce, the most effective scene of which is taken from the French farce of *Maître Pathelin;* and three years later, Konrad Celtes, who had himself written a *Ludus Dianæ* (1500), brought to light the imitations of Terence by Hrotsuith of Gandersheim. Thus was laid the basis of a Latin School Comedy, which not only afforded the humanistic circles of the sixteenth century an outlet for their purely literary aspirations, but also affected materially the development of the national drama.[3]

The Latin school comedy.

Switzerland was the focus of the Reformation drama in the narrower sense of the word; here were produced the

The Reformation drama in Switzerland.

[1] *Schauspiele aus dem* 16. *Jahrhundert*, ed. J. Tittmann (*Deutsche Dichter des* 16. *Jahrh.*, 2, 3), Leipzig, 1868; *Das Drama der Reformationszeit*, ed. R. Froning (D.N.L., 22 [1895]). Cp. J. Minor's bibliographical *Einleitung in das Drama des* 16. *Jahrh.*, in the *Neudrucke*, Nos. 79, 80, Halle, 1889, and R. Genée, *Lehr- und Wanderjahre des deutschen Schauspiels*, Berlin, 1882.

[2] Ed. H. Holstein, Berlin, 1892.

[3] On the Latin School Comedy in Germany, see C. H. Herford, *The Literary Relations of England and Germany in the* 16*th Century*, Cambridge, 1886, 70 ff.

earliest Biblical dramas as distinguished from formless mystery plays. In Basle, in the years 1515 and 1516, Pamphilus Gengenbach,[1] a printer and Meistersinger of Nürnberg, adapted the Fastnachtsspiel, which had been flourishing in Nürnberg for at least a generation, to moral and religious ends. In *Die Gouchmat* he satirises, as his opponent Murner a year or two after, the "fools of love"; in *Der Nollhart* (1517), again, he throws into dialogue form the prophecies of a hermit; but both pieces are rather satires in the interests of the Reformation than actual dramas. An important representative of the Swiss Protestant comedy is Niklaus Manuel (1484-1530),[2] a native of Berne, distinguished not only as a poet, but as a soldier and a painter. At Shrovetide of the year 1522 a play of Manuel's was performed "darinn die warheit in schimpffs wyss (*i.e.*, scherzweise) *vom Pabst vnd siner priesterschafft* gemeldet würt"; it is an effective satire on the ambition and worldly splendour of the Pope and his servants, contrasted with the simple life of Christ and His disciples. Manuel here attempts something more ambitious than a Fastnachtsspiel; with the latter he incorporates the more elaborate effects of the later Swiss Mystery. He draws his figures with a rough but sure hand; his language is gross, but it is the forcible and humorous grossness of the peasants' speech, and, when he likes, no anti-Reformation satirist is more bitter or ruthless than he. In 1525 Manuel produced the admirable Fastnachtsspiel, *Der Ablasskrämer*, and in 1526, *Barbali*, a protest against nunneries. His best satire, and, after Murner's, the best of the Reformation period, is, however, the Dialogue, *Von der Messz kranckheit vnd jrem letsten willen*, which appeared in 1528.

P. Gengenbach.

N. Manuel, 1484-1530.

The drama of the Reformation was not long restricted to Switzerland. In 1527 a *Parabell vam vorlorn Szohn*,[3] written in a Low German dialect by Burkard Waldis, who has been noticed above as a fable-writer, was performed in Riga, and two years later a Dutch humanist, Guilielmus Gnaphæus (1493-1568), produced a Latin drama, *Acolastus*,[4] on the

The *Parabell vam vorlorn Szohn* by B. Waldis, 1527.

[1] Ed. K. Goedeke, Hannover, 1856. Cp. R. Froning, *l.c.*, 1 ff.
[2] Ed. J. Baechtold, Frauenfeld, 1878. Cp. J. Tittmann, *l.c.*, 1, 1 ff.; R. Froning, *l.c.*, 13 ff.
[3] Ed. G. Milchsack (*Neudrucke*, 30), Halle, 1881. Cp. Froning, *l.c.*, 31 ff.
[4] Ed. J. Bolte, Berlin, 1890.

same theme. Waldis's piece is an obvious imitation of the humanistic comedy; it is planned on the model of Terence, and divided into acts, which are separated from one another by hymns. The tone of the play is popular, and, like its author's *Fables*, it bears the imprint of his Lutheran principles. From about 1530 onwards, the new Biblical drama made rapid strides. The Latin *Acolastus* was translated into German verse in Switzerland; a schoolmaster of Augsburg, Sixt Birck (Xystus Betulius, 1501-54) produced at Basle in 1532 a comedy on *Susanna*, and Johann Kolross, a native of Basle, followed with what might be described as a Morality, the *Spil von Fünfferley betrachtnussen* (1532).[1] Both these plays betray, in their strophic choruses, the influence of the School Comedy. Poetically, the best drama of the sixteenth century on the subject of *Susanna* was not Birck's, but that by the Saxon pastor, Paul Rebhun (ca. 1500-46).[2] Rebhun's *Susanna*, which shows that its author was familiar with his predecessor's work, is, in the first instance, remarkable for its ambitious versification. In this piece, Rebhun has attempted to adapt to German requirements the Latin metres which the humanist poets delighted in imitating. Each of his characters speaks, as the author himself boasts, in a different measure, with the result that the play is a kind of metrical mosaic. In a second and much inferior piece, *Die Hochzeit zu Cana* (1538), Rebhun carries out the same plan, but he was obviously in advance of his time; it was not until after Opitz had appeared that the German people took a serious interest in questions of metric. The taste of the public is evident from the fact that an adaptor converted Rebhun's ingenious metres into the simple rhymed couplets known later as "Knittelverse," the prevailing type of German verse in the sixteenth century. But in other respects this *Susanna*, which was publicly performed in 1535, is a remarkable drama. The sense of form, which shows itself in the verse, is also to be observed in the disposition and plan of the play as a whole; it is one of the best-constructed German plays of the sixteenth century. In addition to this, there is a pleasing freshness

Sixt Birck, 1501-54.

P. Rebhun, ca. 1500-46. *Susanna*, 1535.

Die Hochzeit zu Cana, 1538.

[1] Both dramas are reprinted in J. Baechtold's *Schweizerische Schauspiele des 16. Jahrh.* (3 vols., Zurich, 1890-93), 1, 57 ff. and 2, 1 ff.

[2] Ed. H. Palm (Stuttg. Litt. Ver., 49), 1859; the *Susanna* by J. Tittmann, *l.c.*, 1, 25 ff.; and R. Froning, *l.c.*, 101 ff.

in the author's method of adapting the Biblical story to the ordinary conditions of German life, which lends interest to *Susanna* apart from its technical merits. A *Schöne vnd lustige newe Action Von dem Anfang vnd Ende der Welt, darin die gantze Historia vnsers Herrn vnd Heylands Jhesu Christi begriffen* (1580),[1] by Bartholomæus Krüger, is, as its title implies, more of a return to the mystery-play than an advance on the part of the Reformation drama.

B. Krüger's *Anfang vnd Ende der Welt*, 1580.

From the School Comedy the German dramatists thus acquired a sense of form; in return, the Latin writers borrowed ideas from the vernacular drama; the Latin comedy, too, was placed at the service of the Reformation. Thomas Kirchmayer, or, with his Latin name, Naogeorgus (1511-63), infused into his many Latin dramas—*Pammachius* (1538), *Incendia* (1541), and, best of all, *Mercator* (1540)—which were all sooner or later translated into German,[2] the controversial virulence of a reformer: there is, on the whole, more polemic in his pieces than dramatic genius. The master of the humanistic drama of Protestantism was the unhappy Philipp Nikodemus Frischlin (1547-90).[3] A native of Würtemberg, Frischlin became Professor of Poetry in Tübingen in 1568. The envy of his colleagues, his unregulated life and his attacks on the nobility ultimately rendered his position insecure. In 1582, he exchanged his academic chair for the rectorship of a school at Laibach, in Carniola, where, however, he only remained for a short time. He returned to Würtemberg, but his unbridled satirical talents were once more disastrous to him. He attacked the Duke of Würtemberg's councillors in a scurrilous pamphlet, the consequence of which was that in 1590 he was made prisoner and thrown into the castle of Hohenurach. A few months later he lost his life in an attempt to escape from this prison. Frischlin has left nine plays, two of which are described as tragedies, the others as comedies, though the reason for the distinction is not clear. Amongst the latter are a *Rebecca* (1576), a *Susanna* (1577)—

T. Kirchmayer, 1511-63.

P. N. Frischlin, 1547-90.

His dramas.

[1] Reprinted by J. Tittmann, *l.c.*, 2, 1 ff.

[2] A German version of *Pammachius* in R. Froning, *l.c.*, 183 ff.; the original has been edited by J. Bolte and E. Schmidt, Berlin, 1891.

[3] Cp. F. D. Strauss, *N. Frischlins Leben und Schriften*, Frankfort, 1856; Strauss also edited Frischlin's *Deutsche Dichtungen* (Stuttg. Litt. Ver., 41), 1857.

on which the influence of both Birck and Rebhun is noticeable —and a play based on a German subject, *Hildegardis magna* (1579), the Hildegard here being Charles the Great's Swabian wife; but all these pieces are in Latin. A second comedy from German history, *Fraw Wendelgard* (1579), has as its heroine a daughter of Kaiser Heinrich I., and is written in German. During his imprisonment, Frischlin planned a series of Biblical plays in the vernacular; like Hrotsuith of Gandersheim, he had the intention of superseding the Latin Terence with a "Terentius Christianus." To this group of plays belong *Ruth* and *Die Hochzeit zu Cana*. For his exceptional satirical powers, Frischlin found better scope in pieces of more actual interest, such as the *Priscianus vapulans* (1578), in which the barbarous Latin of the middle ages is satirised, and *Julius Cæsar Redivivus* (begun in 1572, but not finished until 1584). In the latter play, which is an interesting testimony to Frischlin's patriotism, Julius Cæsar and Cicero are represented as returning to the upper world; the inventions of printing and gunpowder fill them with wonder, and they extol the German humanists at the expense of those of Italy. *Phasma* (1580), again, parts of which are in German, is a comedy of Frischlin's own time, its subject being the conflicts of the various Protestant sects. The composition of these dramas is often loose and careless, but this defect is counterbalanced by a fineness of character-drawing which is not common in the "bookish" drama of the humanists. Besides plays, Frischlin has left a couple of epics, a volume of elegies and odes, besides two learned philological works on Latin grammar, but all these are in Latin. In general, he gives the impression of having written easily. His German writings met with discouraging contempt on the part of his colleagues and friends, but even had this not been so, he would have remained a Latin poet and a humanist; his literary horizon was, after all, no wider than that of other humanists in the sixteenth century, and his influence upon the development of the German drama was hardly proportionate to his dramatic gifts.

Hans Sachs, 1494-1576.

The chief dramatist of this epoch was not, however, a humanist, but a simple and comparatively unlearned cobbler of Nürnberg. The son of a Nürnberg tailor, Hans Sachs was born on the 5th of November 1494; he enjoyed a

fair education for his time, mastered Latin and made at least a beginning to the study of Greek. In 1509 he was apprenticed to his trade. Although he seems soon to have forgotten his classical acquirements after leaving school, he retained an interest in literature, and especially in that burgher poetry which had been revived in Nürnberg in the fifteenth century by men like Rosenplüt and Folz. Sachs was initiated into the art of the Meistergesang by a weaver, Lienhard Nunnenpeck, and made such rapid progress that in the course of his "Wanderjahre" (1511-16) he gained a reputation for his verses. In 1516 he returned to his native town, and three years later married. Shoemaking was the business of his life, poetry the occupation of his leisure hours. But for more than fifty years, during which time he was the acknowledged leader of the Nürnberg Meistersingers, his productiveness in verse-writing was inexhaustible, with the result that few poets in the history of literature have left behind them such an enormous quantity of verse. In 1567 he made an inventory of his own works, and at that time they extended to sixteen volumes of "Gesangbücher," containing 4275 "Meistergesänge," and eighteen volumes of "Spruchbücher," containing 1773 poems, of which more than two hundred were plays.[1] He died on the 19th of January 1576.

As Meistersinger.

As soon as Hans Sachs returned to Nürnberg from his "Wanderjahre" he became an active member of the "Singschule" there. He came home laden not only with fresh experiences, but with wider literary ideas than the Nürnberg Meistersingers dreamed of, and he at once set about raising the Meistergesang out of its traditional groove. Heir of the great activity in translation which, as we have seen, came in the train of humanism and the Renaissance, Sachs plunged his hands into the stores of anecdote and story that lay at his door; Arigo's translation of Boccaccio's *Decamerone* was the first of the many sources from which the materials of his

[1] Ed. A. von Keller and E. Götze for the Stuttg. Litt. Ver., in 23 vols., 1870-96; the *Fastnachtsspiele* have also been edited by E. Götze, 7 vols., in the Halle *Neudrucke*, 1880-87, the *Fabeln und Schwanke* in the same series and by the same editor (3 vols. have appeared), Halle, 1893-1900. Editions of selections by K. Goedeke and J. Tittmann in *Deutsche Dichter des* 16. *Jahrh.*, 4-6, 2nd ed., Leipzig, 1883-85, and B. Arnold in D.N.L., 20, 21 [1885]. Cp. R. Genée, *Hans Sachs und seine Zeit*, Leipzig, 1894, and C. Schweitzer, *Étude sur la vie et les œuvres de Hans Sachs*, Paris, 1887.

poetry were derived. If only on this account, Sachs is to be regarded as a forerunner of the Renaissance in Germany, but his work also bears testimony to the active interest he took in the spiritual movement of his time and country. Indeed, his vigorous Protestantism threatened, at the beginning, to bring him into conflict with his fellow-townsmen. In *Die Wittembergisch Nachtigall* (1523) he greeted the Reformation with enthusiasm:—

Die Wittembergisch Nachtigall, 1523.

"Wach auff! es nahent gen dem tag!
Ich hör singen im grünen hag
Ein wunigkliche nachtigall,
Ir stim durchklinget berg vnd thal.
Die nacht neigt sich gen occident,
Der tag geht auff von orient,
Die rotprünstige morgenröt
Hier durch die trüben wolcken göt.
Darauss die liechte sonn thut blicken."[1]

While the Pope as lion, the priests as wolves, beset the Christian herd by the moonlight of false doctrine, the nightingale of Wittenberg, Luther, sings loud and clear, proclaiming the dawn of a new day to the world. This "Reimrede" was soon on all lips, and aided materially in the work of the Reformation. Hardly less far-reaching in its effects was a prose *Disputation zwischen einem Chorherren vnd einem Schuhmacher*,[2] which Sachs wrote in the following year. The form of this dialogue suggests the humanistic methods of attack, but it is distinguished from them by the genial humour with which the two disputants are characterised; Sachs's satire is without bitterness.

Dialogues.

It is not, however, as a furtherer of the Reformation that Hans Sachs takes his place in the literary movement of his time. Nor is it as a Meistersinger in the narrower sense of that word, although beyond question he was the greatest Meistersinger of the sixteenth century; indeed, whether we turn to his Meisterlieder, his religious poetry, his parables, or his fables, it must be admitted that he is without a rival among his contemporaries. But as a Meistersinger, he only followed with more success lines which other Meistersingers also followed or learned to follow. To find Hans Sachs as a pioneer, and virtually as a creator of new literary forms,

[1] B. Arnold's edition, I, 111.
[2] Ed. R. Köhler, *Vier Dialoge von Hans Sachs*, Weimar, 1858.

we must turn to his "Schwänke" and his dramas. As a "Schwankdichter," a teller of short, witty anecdotes in verse, always pointed with a moral, Hans Sachs is unsurpassed. The Schwank was one of the favourite forms of poetry at the time of the Reformation, but in Sachs's hands the manner of telling the anecdote became for the first time as interesting as the anecdote itself. He loved stories—loved them indiscriminately. His delight in them was akin to that of a child, and he was never weary of re-telling them in his homely but hearty "Knittelverse." Through everything he writes, shines his own genial personality; humour is never absent, and the bitterness of a Brant or a Murner was foreign to his nature. Schwänke such as *Der Eiszapfen* (1536), *Sankt Peter mit der Geiss* (1555), *Sankt Peter mit den Landsknechten* (1556), *Der Bauer mit dem bodenlosen Sack* (1563), are genuine masterpieces, even judged by modern criteria of verse-narrative. The majority of Sachs's stories were drawn from his wide reading, but he does not always restrict himself to subjects of which he has read or heard; his fables and allegories show that he had considerable powers of invention. A favourite allegorical figure with him, for instance, is the dream, which he employs effectively in the poems directed against Nürnberg's enemy, the cruel Markgraf Albrecht von Brandenburg.

As "Schwankdichter."

More important than his "Schwänke" were Sachs's dramas. He found the "Fastnachtsspiel" or Shrovetide play in the rude, primitive condition in which the earlier Nürnberg poets Rosenplüt and Folz had left it; he eliminated the coarseness, for which he substituted his own kindly humour. The Fastnachtsspiel did not certainly become very dramatic in his hands, but it must be remembered that this type of play never altogether lost its original character of dialogue rather than action; the Fastnachtsspiel, as Sachs conceived it, is virtually only a Schwank in dialogue form. Nowhere, however, does his ability to draw the people of the world in which he lived show to better advantage than in these plays, for their dramatic nature imposed on the poet the necessity of drawing his characters clearly and with bold strokes. In this power of portraiture, this ability to pick out the essentials of character, Sachs's poetic genius reveals itself, more than anywhere else. His knights and

His Fastnachtsspiele.

priests, peasants and rogues, jealous husbands and greedy merchants, deceitful women and lazy servants, are no less representative literary types of their time than were the figures which the German dramatists of the early eighteenth century adapted from Molière and Holberg. The best of Hans Sachs's Fastnachtsspiele, such as *Der farend Schüler im Paradeiss* (1550), *Fraw Warheit wil niemand herbergen* (1550), *Das heiss Eysen* (1551), *Der Baur im Fegfeuer* (1552), are interesting enough still to be read with pleasure, and even to be performed.

Sachs's longer dramas.

As a dramatist on a more ambitious scale, Hans Sachs was not so successful. From his standpoint, a tragedy or comedy only differed from a Fastnachtsspiel in so far as it was longer and its plot more complicated; it was also possible to divide it roughly into parts which, following the humanists, he designated "Actus." Of the true nature of the drama, of the elementary requirements of dramatic construction, he knew nothing. His choice of subjects for dramatic treatment was no less catholic than in the case of the Schwänke; he dramatised the most difficult subjects without knowing that they were difficult. The Bible, the Greek classics, the Latin dramatists, and even a German saga such as that of Siegfried (*Der hörnen Sewfriedt*, 1557), were equally acceptable to him, and he told all his stories in the same manner. That the personages of remote ages differed in any way from those who were familiar to him in everyday life, that kings and queens should behave or speak otherwise than the ordinary burgher of Nürnberg, is a fact of which he took no account. Even God Himself, who is introduced into the *Comedie Die vngleichen Kinder Evä wie sie Gott der Herr anredt* (1553), is represented as an ordinary kindly priest. "Adam vnnd Eva," says the stage direction at the beginning of the third act, "geen ein, vnd Abel selb sechst, Kain auch selb sechst."

"*Adam spricht:*
Eva, ist das hauss auch gezirt,
Auff das, wenn der Herr kummen wirt,
Das es als schön vnd lüstig ste,
Wie ich dir hab befolhen ee?

Eva spricht:
Alle ding war schon zu bereyt
Za nechten vmb die vesperzeit.

Adam spricht:

Ir kinderlein, ich sich den Herrn
Mit seinen Engeln kummen von ferrn.
Nun stelt euch in die ordnung fein
Vnd bald der Herre dritt herein,
Neygt euch vnd bietet im die hend!
Schaw zu, wie stelt sich an dem end
Der Kain vnd sein galgenrott
Sam wöllen sie fliehen vor Gott!

Der Herr geet ein mit zweyen Engeln, geyd den segen vnd spricht:

Der fried sey euch, ir kinderlein!"[1]

His dramatic *technique.*

The *technique* of Hans Sachs's dramas is virtually that of the mystery-plays; his heroes are born, live, and die, wander from one part of the world to another, in the course of a few hundred lines. The action is assisted, where necessary, by the "Ehrenhold," or herald, who also speaks the prologue and epilogue. No attempt is made to preserve unity of time or place, and the unity of action is almost as loosely complied with. German dramatists had yet to learn that to make actors recite rhymed dialogue was hardly even the beginning of a national drama; and, as will be seen in the following chapter, their first lesson in the practical side of dramatic art came, towards the close of the century, from England.

Hans Sachs represents only one aspect of the intellectual and artistic life which made Nürnberg, at the beginning of the sixteenth century, the perfect type of a free German "Reichsstadt." Besides Meistersingers and chroniclers, Nürnberg numbered among its citizens eminent humanists like Wilibald Pirckheimer (1470-1530), sculptors like Adam Kraft (1440-1507) and Peter Vischer (ca. 1455-1529), and above all, Germany's greatest artist, Albrecht Dürer (1471-1528). Where the drama failed, art, in Dürer's hands, succeeded; not in literature, but in Dürer's many-sided activity, is to be found the fullest expression of the nation's awakening under the stimulus of the Reformation.

[1] Edition by Keller and Götze, 1 (Stuttg. Litt. Ver., 102), 64 f.

CHAPTER V.

SATIRE AND DRAMA IN THE LATER SIXTEENTH CENTURY.

WHILE the foundations of a German Volksdrama were being laid by Hans Sachs in Nürnberg, the novel was gradually being evolved from the medieval romance of chivalry in Western Germany. It must, however, be borne in mind that the fiction of this period was not a pure form of literary art; it succeeded no more than other forms of literature, in dissociating itself from satire and didacticism; and thus the word novel is hardly to be understood in its modern significance. The fiction of the Reformation period, such as it was, commences with the Alsatian Jörg Wickram (died ca. 1560),[1] who, like Hans Sachs, was both Meistersinger and dramatist; besides novels, he wrote Fastnachtsspiele and Biblical tragedies—*Der verlorne Sun* (1540), *Tobias* (1551)—on the model of the Swiss dramatists. His first attempt at narrative fiction was probably an adaptation of a French novel of adventure, *Ritter Galmy vss Schottland* (1539), which appeared anonymously. A more independent work is the didactic romance, *Der Jungen Knaben Spiegel* (1554), in which the evangelical burgher's love of moralising is clearly evident: in the *Irr Reitend Pilger* (1556), again, the author's moral intention is reinforced by satire. In the *Knabenspiegel*, and still more in the less didactic *Goldtfaden* (1557)—stories in which the peasant or citizen takes the place of the knight, and the practical virtues of the middle class are brought into the foreground—Wickram introduces in fiction the new social ideas which had already manifested themselves in verse and satire.

J. Wickram, died ca. 1560.

[1] Cp. W. Scherer, *Die Anfänge des deutschen Prosaromans und Jörg Wickram von Colmar* (*Quellen und Forschungen*, 21), Strassburg, 1877.

If not the first modern novelist, he is at least the first representative of that fiction which lay between medieval romance, on the one hand, and the modern social novel, as created by Richardson, on the other. Wickram was a keen observer of the life around him, and knew how to describe it; but his novels—like almost all the literature of the century—have little unity: they fall asunder in disconnected episodes and "Schwänke." Thus the most satisfactory of his books is not a novel, but the collection of anecdotes and witty tales which he published in 1555 under the title *Das Rollwagen büchlein*.[1] This is a "Büchlein, darinn vil guter schwenck vnd Historien begriffen werden, so man in schiffen vnd auff den rollwegen [*i.e.*, stage-coaches], dessgleichen in scherheüsern vnnd badstuben, zu langweiligen zeiten erzellen mag,"—in other words, a book of entertainment for the use of travellers. The best testimony to the popularity of the *Rollwagenbüchlein* is that a large number of imitations appeared in the course of the next few years. The most popular of these were J. Frey's *Garten gesellschafft* (1556), M. Montanus's *Weg kürtzer* (1557), M. Lindener's *Katzipori* (1558) and *Rastbüchlein* (1558), V. Schumann's *Nachtbüchlein* (1559), and H. W. Kirchhoff's *Wendvnmuth* (1565-1603); but, with the possible exception of the last mentioned, none can be compared with Wickram's collection.

Das Rollwagen büchlein, 1555.

Bartholomeus Ringwaldt (1530 or 1531-99),[2] an evangelical pastor who was born in Frankfort-on-the-Oder, was more of a satirist than Wickram. This writer's *trewer Eckart* (1588), a half-didactic, half-satiric poem in rhyming couplets, the hero of which visits heaven and hell, became a veritable Volksbuch, and a longer poem, *Die lauter Warheit* (1585), although obtrusively didactic, was hardly less popular. Ringwaldt is to be seen at his best in the dramatic satire *Speculum mundi* (1590), where the dissoluteness of the country nobility is subjected to the lash. His Church hymns, again, have at least one essential feature in common with the religious poetry of the Reformation; they catch admirably the tone of the Volkslied. Without touching a high level, his work throws an interesting light on the life and temper of the

B. Ringwaldt, ca. 1530-99.

[1] Ed. H. Kurz, *Deutsche Bibliothek*, 7, Leipzig, 1865.

[2] Selections from Ringwaldt in E. Wolff's *Reinke de Vos und satirisch-didaktische Dichtung* (D.N.L., 19 [1893]), 471 ff.

later sixteenth century in Germany. A more gifted writer than Ringwaldt was Georg Rollenhagen, who was born near Berlin in 1542 and died in 1609. Rollenhagen, by profession preacher and pedagogue, began with elaborate school-dramas based on older Biblical plays. It was not until 1595 that he published the work by which he is now alone remembered, the *Froschmeuseler: der Frösch vnd Meuse wunderbare Hoffhaltunge*,[1] a version of the *Battle of the Frogs and Mice* (*Batrachomyomachia*). The Greek poem was a parody on the Homeric epic; but Rollenhagen, who had learned the comic possibilities of the beast allegory from *Reinke de Vos*, uses the story as a vehicle for his own views on the social, political, and especially the religious movement of the age. The *Froschmeuseler* is less a beast epic than a didactic satire in the interests of the Reformation. The most pleasing side of Rollenhagen's work is the sympathetic interest which he takes in the animal world; but he, too, lacked the sustaining power which is indispensable to a long work, and in spite of its promising beginning, his epic ultimately breaks up into a series of loosely connected episodes.

G. Rollenhagen, 1542-1609.

Der Froschmeuseler, 1595.

The master of German satire in the later sixteenth century, the heir of Brant and Murner, was the Alsatian, Johann Fischart.[2] Fischart "der Mentzer"—*i.e.*, the Mainzer, a cognomen which his father also bore—was probably born in Strassburg between 1545 and 1550. He received a good humanistic education in Worms with Kaspar Scheidt (died 1565), to whom he seems to have been related. Scheidt, it may be mentioned, was the translator of the *Grobianus*, that famous Latin satire on the drunkenness, viciousness, and coarseness of the age, which F. Dedekind (ca. 1525-98) built up round "Sankt Grobianus," Brant's type of the "grobe Narr." Dedekind's satire appeared in 1549, Scheidt's translation[3] in 1551. Fischart spent several years in travel and study, visiting France, Holland, England, and Italy, and

Johann Fischart, ca. 1550-90.

Grobianus, 1549, 1551.

[1] Ed. K. Goedeke, 2 vols. (*Deutsche Dichter*, 8, 9), Leipzig, 1876. Cp. D.N.L., 19, 395 ff.

[2] Selected works, ed. K. Goedeke (*Deutsche Dichter*, 15), Leipzig, 1880; A. Hauffen in D.N.L., 18, 1-3 [1892-95]. Cp. E. Schmidt's article on Fischart in the *Allg. deutsche Biographie*, 7 (1878), 31 ff., and P. Besson, *Étude sur J. Fischart*, Paris, 1889.

[3] Ed. G. Milchsack (*Neudrucke* 34, 35), Halle, 1882. Cp. A. Hauffen, *Kaspar Scheidt, der Lehrer Fischarts* (*Quellen und Forschungen*, 66), Strassburg, 1889.

acquiring a rich fund of knowledge and experience which later found its way in promiscuous profusion into his books. In 1574 he graduated as *doctor juris* in Basle, and between 1575 and 1581 all his most important works were published in Strassburg, where his brother-in-law, Jobin, had established a printing-press. In 1581 he became an advocate in Speyer, two years later Amtmann or district judge in Forbach near Saarbrücken. His death took place in 1590 or 1591.

Fischart began his career in 1570 as a champion of the Reformation, by writing satires on the Catholics. Of these, the most important are a German version of a Dutch Calvinistic satire by Philipp Marnix, which was published in 1579 under the title, *Binenkorb des heyl. römischen Imenschwarms*, and the *Wunderlichst vnerhörtest Legend vnd Beschreibung des Abgeführten, quartirten, gevierten und viereckechten vierhörnigen Hütleins* [*der Jesuiten*], which appeared a year later: the latter is a scathing satire on the Jesuits, based on a French model. Fischart himself was a pious and sturdy Protestant, with leanings towards Calvinism; but he was by no means intolerant on questions of dogma. He followed the steady advance of Protestantism with warm interest, and hailed with exultation the defeat of the Spanish Armada in 1588. In 1578 he published his *Philosophisch Ehzuchtbüchlin*, which is made up of two small treatises of Plutarch's, a dialogue by Erasmus, and other fragments, and is one of the most pleasing books of its kind produced in the century of the Reformation. As a poet, Fischart is seen to best advantage in the epic poem, *Das glückhafft Schiff von Zürich* (1576), which as regards form, at least, is without a rival in the literature of the sixteenth century. In the summer of 1576 a number of Zurich citizens made in a single day the voyage to Strassburg by way of Limmat, Aare, and Rhine, in order to attend a shooting-festival. The bonds of neighbourly feeling were symbolised by a basin of "Hirsebrei" (millet porridge), which, cooked in the morning before the voyagers left Zurich, still retained its warmth when the "glückhafft Schiff" arrived in the harbour of Strassburg at nightfall. Fischart's style, notwithstanding an occasional display of learning, has neither the dryness of a mere imitation nor the coarseness of the popular literature of the day. His model was the classical epic; the rivers, the

Der Binenkorb, 1579.

Das Jesuitenhütlein, 1580.

Das Ehzuchtbüchlin, 1578.

Das glückhafft Schiff, 1576.

landscape, the sun itself, all play a *rôle* in the eventful voyage :—

"Die Sonn het auch jr freüd damit,
Das so dapffer das Schiff fortschritt
Vnd schin so hell inn dRuder rinnen,
Das sie von fern wie Spiegel schinen.
Das Gestad schertzt auch mit dem Schiff,
Wann das wasser dem land zulieff,
Dann es gab einen widerthon
Gleich wie die Rhuder thäten gon.
Ein Flut die ander trib so gschwind,
Das sie eim vnderm gsicht verschwind.
Ja der Rein wurf auch auff klein wällen,
Die dantzten vmb das schif zu gsellen.
Inn summa, alles freüdig war,
Die Schiffart zu vollbringen gar."[1]

The buoyant exultation with which this voyage was greeted by Fischart was not without a certain political significance, and twelve years later, Strassburg, Zurich, and Berne entered into a formal alliance which he celebrated in "poetischen Glückwünschungen."

It was probably the fault of the age in which Fischart lived that a satirical intention so often lay behind his humour. In general, his outlook upon life was optimistic, and although he reviled the abuses of the time, he did not doubt that the cause of Protestantism would triumph and was triumphing. Amongst his earliest works, there is a poetic version of *Eulenspiegel—Eulenspiegel Reimensweiss* (1572)—in which the satire of the original is allowed to fall into the background. His own additions, which increased the original "Schwänke" to some three times their bulk, weakened, however, instead of improving the work. He was more successful with the burlesque epic *Flöh Haz, Weiber Traz* (1573), in which, with coarse but genuine humour, the flea is made to complain of the injustice of his lot.[2]

Eulenspiegel Reimensweiss, 1572.

Flöh Haz, 1573.

Masterly as was Fischart's command of verse, his importance is to be sought rather in his prose works. Here he learned his art from a congenial master, François Rabelais. The influence of Rabelais is first noticeable on Fischart's witty parody of weather prognostication, *Aller Practik Grossmutter*, written in 1572, and on the translation from the Latin of two

[1] A. Hauffen's edition, 1, 144 (ll. 387 ff.) (Schin inn dRuder rinnen, "schien in die Furchen der Ruder"; gon, "gehen"; zu gsellen, "als Gefährten.")

[2] With the exception of the *Binenkorb*, the works mentioned above will be found in A. Hauffen's edition. (Haz, "Hetze"; Traz, "Trotz.")

ironical eulogies on gout, *Podagrammisch Trostbüchlin* (1577). But his masterpiece is unquestionably the translation of the first book of Rabelais's great comic romance, to which he gave the title *Affenteurliche vnd Vngeheurliche Geschichtschrift* —or, in the second edition, *Affentheurlich Naupengeheurliche Geschichtklitterung — Vom Leben rhaten vnd Thaten der for langen weilen Vollenwolbeschraiten Helden vnd Herrn Grandgusier, Gargantoa vnd Pantagruel* (1575).[1] The most interesting feature of this work is the remarkable way in which Fischart has Germanised the French novel; as he himself says, it is "auf den Teutschen Meridian visirt." Rabelais is assimilated as never original was assimilated by a translator before, even the proper names being rendered by German equivalents. Indeed, Fischart hardly translates; he uses his author merely as a channel through which to express his own ideas and consequently the German *Gargantua* has expanded to some three times the size of the original. He finds an opportunity in this book for displaying both his wide humanistic culture and his intimate knowledge of the German people. The two main currents of German life in the sixteenth century, as represented by the learned humanist on the one side and the Protestant "Volk" on the other, seem here to run side by side. From an artistic point of view, the originality of the *Geschichtklitterung* is not to its advantage. The style of the book is clumsy and unwieldy, and the humour is weakened by persistent exaggeration. Every idea in the original is extended and contorted until it is almost past recognition; where Rabelais is content with one epithet, the German writer has a dozen. As a coiner of comic words, Fischart has the talent of an Aristophanes, although here, too, his love of exaggeration leads him into tasteless extremes, and the heaping up of attributes and metaphors, which is to be traced in all the humorous prose of the sixteenth century, begins to lose its effectiveness in Fischart's hands. The old vice of formlessness, which clings to the literature of this epoch, a vice to which Fischart once —in the *Glückhafft Schiff*—rose superior, sets in again here in full force.

Die Geschichtklitterung, 1575.

[1] Ed. A. Alsleben in the *Neudrucke*, 65-71, Halle, 1887 (the title might be modernised, "Abenteuerliche schrullenhaft-geheuerliche Geschichtskladde" &c.); *Aller Practik Grossmutter* (a "Practik" was a kind of calendar), in the same series, 2, Halle, 1876; the *Podagrammisch Trostbüchlein* in A. Hauffen, *l.c.*, 3, 1 ff.

For a writer of such originality, Fischart was remarkably dependent upon others not merely for the materials of his books, but even for the books themselves: he invariably preferred translating an old work to creating a new one. At the same time, much of his literary work was obviously not a matter of choice, but of necessity. This was undoubtedly the case with his translation of the sixth book of the French romance, *Amadis de Gaula* (*Amadis aus Frankreich;* 1572). The five earlier books had appeared before this date, and so popular was the romance in Germany, that down to the close of the eighteenth century eighteen more books were added by various hands. Another translation of Fischart's would also seem to have been undertaken for his brother-in-law and not on his own initiative—that of Jean Bodin's *De Magorum Dæmonomania* (1581). It is, at least, difficult to reconcile the suppression of witches which this book preaches, with Fischart's own Protestant tolerance. But to judge from his version of a Middle High German poem, *Ritter Peter von Stauffenberg* (1588),[1] he was probably, after all, not above the belief in devils and witches, which neither humanism nor the Reformation had power to eradicate.

Translation of *Amadis de Gaula*, 1572.

With regard to its faith, its superstition, its knowledge and aspiration, the age of the Reformation is best reflected in a Volksbuch by an unknown author, published by Johann Spies in Frankfort-on-the-Main, in 1587—namely, the *Historia von D. Johann Fausten, dem weitbeschreyten Zauberer vnd Schwartzkünstler.*[2] The traditions which had gradually formed themselves round this typical figure of the sixteenth century here take form for the first time. The Faust of the Volksbuch, like so many dreamers of the time, hopes to obtain by means of alchemy, astrology, and magic, rest from the desires and longings that torture him; so completely, indeed, was Faust associated with all that was considered daring in thought or invention, that, at an early date, the popular imagination identified him with the printer Fust. And this Faust, in the words of the Volksbuch, "name an sich Adlers Flügel, wolte alle Gründ am Himmel vnd Erden

The Volksbuch of *D. Johann Faust*, 1587.

[1] Ed. A. Hauffen, *l.c.*, 1, 263 ff.

[2] Ed. W. Braune (*Neudrucke*, 7, 8), Halle, 1878. Cp. E. Schmidt, *Charakteristiken*, Berlin, 1886, 1 ff.

erforschen, dann sein Fürwitz, Freyheit vnd Leichtfertigkeit stache vnnd reitzte ihn also." He makes a pact with the devil, who opens up to him new worlds of unlimited sensual enjoyment; he travels far and wide, to Italy, to the East, conjures up the most beautiful women of all lands, amongst them Helen of Troy, who lives with him a year and bears him a son; until at last the twenty-four years for which he had stipulated elapse, and he is carried off in triumph to hell. Thus, it might be said, the evangelical spirit of Protestant theology avenged itself on the genii of knowledge and inquiry, which it had itself set free. Two centuries of intellectual evolution had still to pass before a new humanism and a new philosophy of life were able to vanquish the narrow standpoint of Lutheran Protestantism; it was almost the end of the eighteenth century before Goethe discovered that the longings and ambitions which bring about the tragedy in Faust's life do not merit damnation, but belong to the most precious attributes of humanity.

New dramatic beginnings.

Towards the close of the sixteenth century the German drama entered upon—or, at least, gave promise of entering upon—a new stage of its history. From the last years of this century to the middle of the following one, Germany was repeatedly visited by companies of strolling English players, the so-called "Englischen Comödianten." These actors brought with them not only the theatrical effects of the Elizabethan theatre, but also the highly developed histrionic art of the English stage; and above all, they brought the comic personage of the English drama, the clown, or "Pickelhering," as he soon came to be called in Germany. On their first visits to the Continent, the "Englischen Comödianten" played only in English, and, in the serious parts of their dramas, had to depend upon their pantomimic abilities to attract the public. But the music and costumes, the blood-curdling scenes and buffoonery with which the plays were liberally furnished, made up for the disadvantages of the foreign tongue, and, at an early date, the comic *rôles* were either played entirely in German, or interspersed with as much broken German as the actor could command. Soon these English troupes found German imitators, and thus the German theatre, as an institution, may be said to have begun with troupes of strolling actors who, to commend their perfor-

The "Englischen Comödianten."

mances, described themselves as "English." The repertories of these companies consisted in the main of translations, or rather of mangled stage-versions of popular English dramas. The plays were in prose and constructed solely with a view to crass effect; they are devoid of literary worth and have no value, except that they opened a new horizon to the German drama. Two volumes, containing eighteen dramas and a few comic interludes, were published in 1620 and 1630, under the titles *Englische Comödien vnd Tragödien* and *Liebeskampff oder ander Theil der Englischen Comödien vnd Tragödien.*[1]

The Thirty Years' War was largely responsible for the fact that the initiative of the English actors met with so little encouragement. An immediate influence of their art on the German drama is only to be found in three authors, Landgraf Moriz von Hessen, Herzog Heinrich Julius von Braunschweig —at both of whose Courts English actors were maintained from 1592 on—and Jakob Ayrer, a notary of Nürnberg.

Landgraf Moriz von Hesse, 1572-1632.

Landgraf Moriz of Hesse (1572-1632) is credited with a number of original plays, but none has been preserved; a dozen plays by the Duke of Brunswick (1564-1613), however, were published in 1593 and 1594.[2] Duke Heinrich Julius stands completely under the influence of his players; his dramas are full of the horrors which the English actors delighted in; indeed, the tragedies *Titus Andronicus* and *Von einem vngerathenen Sohn* exceed in this respect anything to be found in the collections of *Englische Comödien und Tragödien.* Music and dances form a large part of the entertainment, and the clown retains a name of English origin, "Johan Bouset." The humorous interludes are more refined than those in the *Englischen Comödien*, but not very original; the Duke of Brunswick usually creates his humorous effects by making the clown speak "Plattdeutsch." The construction of the plays is only a helpless imitation of their models; their subjects—and the Duke, it may be noted, shows a preference for "gallant" themes—are rarely chosen with a view to their suitability for dramatic treatment.

Duke Heinrich Julius of Brunswick, 1564-1613.

[1] *Die Schauspiele der englischen Komödianten*, ed. W. Creizenach (D.N.L., 23 [1889]); another selection is edited by J. Tittmann in *Deutsche Dichter des 16. Jahrh.*, 13, Leipzig, 1880.

[2] Ed. W. L. Holland (Stuttg. Litt. Ver., 36), 1855; selections by J. Tittmann in *Deutsche Dichter des 16. Jahrh.*, 14, Leipzig, 1880.

The best side of the Duke of Brunswick's work is his skill in characterising his personages; Vincentius Ladislaus, for instance, in the play of that name, is an excellent specimen of the favourite Renaissance type, the boasting soldier, regarded in the light of grotesque caricature. But Heinrich Julius is, after all, almost as far as Hans Sachs from a true understanding of the nature of the drama and of dramatic construction.

Jakob Ayrer, died 1605.

A much more important dramatist is Jakob Ayrer (died 1605), in whose seventy odd pieces—sixty-six were published in 1618 under the title *Opus Thœatricum*[1]—an attempt is made to ingraft on the indigenous drama of Hans Sachs the art of the "Englischen Comödianten," with which, since 1593, the citizens of Nürnberg had had repeated opportunity of making themselves acquainted. In the essentials of his literary art, Ayrer is Sachs's successor: he adopts the rhymed couplets of his master; he employs the same broad, undramatic method of unrolling his story, and even in his choice of themes he follows to a large extent Sachs's example. But he is more ambitious, his serious dramas being invariably longer, and he shows a preference for subjects which can be extended over whole cycles of plays. Livy's *Römische Historien der Stadt Rom*, from Romulus to Tarquinius Superbus, are, for instance, the theme of a cycle of five pieces; the *Comedia von Valentino vnd Vrso* is divided into four plays, *Die Schöne Melusina* into two, while the *Heldenbuch* is spread over three long dramas—*Vom Hueg Diterichen*, *Von dem Keiser Ottnit*, and *Vom Wolff Dieterichen*. What Ayrer learned from his English models, on the other hand, was mainly of a technical nature. He had a sharper eye for stage effects than Hans Sachs; he borrowed from the "Comödianten" their sensationalism; like them, he made the most of scenes of bloodshed and murder, and in his later dramas, at least, he adopted the improvements of the stage introduced by the English guests. The most satisfactory of Ayrer's longer pieces are the *Comedia von der schönen Phoenicia* and the *Comedia von der schönen Sidea*, both of which were probably written after 1600. The plot of the latter, it is worth noting, bears a strong resemblance to Shakespeare's *Tempest*, a fact which would

[1] Ed. A. von Keller (Stuttg. Litt. Ver., 76-80), 1864-65. Cp. also J. Tittmann, *Schauspiele aus dem 16. Jahrh.*, 2 (*Deutsche Dichter*, 3), 121 ff.

seem to imply that both pieces had the same source. The comic element is less genuine and spontaneous in Ayrer's plays than in the Fastnachtsspiele of Hans Sachs; he introduced clowns on the English model, but usually made them personages of the play, not merely jesters whose duty it was to entertain the audience between the acts.

Ayrer's "Singspiele."

The most interesting and original of Ayrer's dramatic works are not the longer dramas, or even the "Fastnachtsspiele," but his "Singspiele." Although not perhaps the actual inventor of the German "Singspiel," Ayrer was the first to make it a popular form of dramatic art. The themes of these plays are the same humorous anecdotes which did service for the Nürnberg "Fastnachtsspiele," with the difference that the dialogue is here interspersed with songs set to popular melodies.

Ayrer was on the right road towards the realisation of a German national drama. His work shows an unquestionable advance upon that of his predecessor, Hans Sachs — an advance, not in dramatic construction or characterisation, but in the practical quality of stage-effectiveness. But his talent was not strong enough to give the drama a literary stamp. His plays did not—any more than those of the wandering actors whose repertory he imitated—rise above the level of ephemeral productions intended to amuse the public of his day.

CHAPTER VI.

THE RENAISSANCE.

The Renaissance, which spread from Italy to France in the sixteenth century and attained its maturity in the great century of Louis XIV., was essentially a Latin movement; it is the supreme expression of the Latin spirit in art and literature. But it was too momentous an upheaval in the intellectual life of Europe to remain restricted to the Latin races, and, sooner or later, it spread to Germanic and Slavonic lands. Here, however, that inner harmony between the spirit of the Renaissance and the national temperament, which existed in Italy, in France, and in Spain, was absent, and, in consequence, it remained in the north of Europe—even in Sweden, where it found most favourable soil—essentially a foreign movement. From it, however, the non-Latin races obtained their models of literary form and style. In Germany, the Renaissance cannot be said to have set in before the first years of the seventeenth century, and what good effects it might have had were, in great measure, thwarted by the Thirty Years' War. Thus for the intellectual life of the German people as a whole this movement had, and could have, but little importance, and the lessons which German poetry might have learned from it had practically all to be learned over again at the beginning of the eighteenth century.

The Renaissance in Germany.

The humanists were naturally the pioneers of the Renaissance in Germany; they were the true cosmopolites in the age of the Reformation, and, through their activity, the channels between Germany and Italy were kept open. We have already seen how they had assisted the spread of Romance literature north of the Alps, and how under their stimulus

Latin, Italian, and French works were translated. These translations formed the groundwork for the German Renaissance. No town has a better claim to be regarded as the birthplace of the new movement than Heidelberg; here, in this focus of humanistic activity, the early Latin comedies of Wimpfeling and Reuchlin had been produced; here Konrad Celtes had founded his Latin society, the "Sodalitas litteraria Rhenana"; and here, too, stands the noblest monument of Renaissance art that Germany possesses, the Castle of Heidelberg.

Paul Schede, 1539-1602.

In 1586 the learned Paul Schede, or, to call him by his Latin name, Paulus Melissus (1539-1602), settled as librarian in Heidelberg. Fourteen years earlier, Schede had published a translation of the *Psalms* on the model of Clement Marot,[1] and had thus opened up the channel through which the literature of the French Renaissance found its way into Germany. Round him, in the last years of the sixteenth century, gathered a group of scholarly writers who looked with no unfriendly eye on the rise of a vernacular poetry. The most gifted of the Heidelberg poets, and their spokesman, was a writer of the younger generation, Julius Wilhelm Zincgref (1591-1635). In 1624, as a supplement to his edition of the poems of Martin Opitz, Zincgref published an *Anhang underschiedlicher aussgesuchter Gedichten*,[2] namely, an anthology of verse by members of the Heidelberg circle; but better than any of the poems in this collection are two stirring war poems of Zincgref's own, *Vermanung zur Dapfferkeit* (1625) and *Soldaten Lob* (1632). His most popular book was his *Scharpfsinnige kluge Sprüch* or *Apothegmata* (1626), a collection of anecdotes and "Sprüche" which reflect a healthy understanding of the German people.

J. W. Zincgref, 1591-1635.

Associated with the Heidelberg group of poets was Georg Rodolf Weckherlin, who was born in Stuttgart in 1584. Like so many of the leading thinkers and poets of the seventeenth century, Weckherlin was a widely travelled man, and he had lived so long in England that he had practically become an Englishman. In 1644 he was appointed "Secretary for Foreign Tongues" to the English Government, a position which he held until the establishment of the Commonwealth, when he was succeeded by no less a poet than John Milton.

G. R. Weckherlin, 1584-1653.

[1] Ed. M. H. Jellinek (*Neudrucke*, 144-148), Halle, 1896.
[2] *Neudrucke*, 15, Halle, 1879.

He died in London in 1653. Of all the pioneers of the German Renaissance, Weckherlin had the clearest aims; he saw what the Renaissance had meant for France and England, and he set about the task of introducing it in his own land. He was, for instance, the first German poet, or one of the first, to write Sonnets and Alexandrines. From his *Oden und Gesänge* (1618-19), with their Horatian grace and rhythm, dates the new era in German poetry. He was not only, as he himself insisted in the preface to his collected *Gaistliche und Weltliche Gedichte* (1641)[1] a forerunner of Opitz, — a fact which the later members of Opitz's school refused to acknowledge—but he had also a far more genuine feeling for poetry than the majority of them.

Small as was the little band of pioneers in Heidelberg, their work had something of the buoyant freshness of the early Renaissance in Italy and France. They are too insignificant to be compared with the French "Pleiade," but the position they occupy in literary history is analogous to that of the French poets. And the Messiah whom they hoped for was not long in coming. On the 17th of June 1619, Martin Opitz, a young Silesian who had been born in Bunzlau in the end of 1597, matriculated as a student of the University. Even before he came to Heidelberg, Opitz had discussed, in a Latin essay, *Aristarchus, sive de contemptu linguae Teutonicae* (1617), how German poetry might be revived, and had exercised himself in what to the whole seventeenth century was a most vital form of poetic composition, the flattery of those in high places. His stay in Heidelberg was short, but its effects are noticeable in the verses he wrote at this time, which show the influence of Zincgref. To avoid the war and the plague, Opitz fled in 1620 to Holland, where he discovered his ideal poet in the person of the Dutch scholar, Daniel Heinsius. In 1621 he was again at home in Silesia, but, a few months later, accepted a professorship in the gymnasium of Weissenburg (Karlsburg) in Transylvania. Here he devoted his leisure to an ambitious work on the antiquities of Transylvania, which was not completed, but the materials collected for it were utilised

Martin Opitz, 1597-1639.

Aristarchus, 1617.

[1] Ed. H. Fischer (Stuttg. Litt. Ver., 199, 200), 1894-95; a selection by K. Goedeke in *Deutsche Dichter des 17. Jahrh.*, 5, Leipzig, 1873. Cp. *Allg. deutsche Biographie*, 41 (1896), 375 ff.

Zlatna, 1623.

poetically in the epic *Zlatna, oder von Rhue des Gemütes* (1623). In 1625, we find Opitz in Vienna, where his poetic fame had preceded him; he was solemnly crowned with laurel by the Emperor Ferdinand II., and, in 1628, ennobled under the title Opitz von Boberfeld. The patron who had been instrumental in obtaining for Opitz the second of these honours was no other than the bitter enemy of Protestantism, Graf Hannibal von Dohna, whose attempts to catholicise Silesia with the sword have made him one of the notorious figures of the Thirty Years' War. Opitz became his secretary, and wrote for him the *Lob des Kriegesgottes* (1628), besides translating a Latin work by the Jesuit, M. Becanus, against the Reformation. Dohna also procured Opitz the means for a journey to Paris, where the poet made the acquaintance of Hugo Grotius. When, in 1632, Dohna was compelled to flee from Breslau, Opitz found it politic to seek a new patron, and turned to the son of the Danish king, Prince Ulrich of Holstein, to whom he dedicated his best work, the *Trost Gedichte in Widerwertigkeit des Kriegs* (1633), which had been written some twelve years before in Jutland. The former Secretary of Graf Dohna now made no concealment of his sympathies in the religious struggle of the time; the spirit of these *Trostgedichte* is undisguisedly Protestant. The form of the work is that of an epic in four books. "Ich wil," he says—

Lob des Kriegesgottes, 1628.

Trost Gedichte, 1633.

> "Ich wil die Pierinnen,
> Die nie nach teutscher Art noch haben reden können,
> Sampt ihrem Helicon mit dieser meiner Hand
> Versetzen biss hieher in unser Vatterland.
> Es wird inkünfftig noch die Bahn, so ich gebrochen,
> Der, so geschickter ist, nach mir zu bessern suchen." [1]

His next step was to win by means of a personal eulogy the ear of King Wladislaus of Poland. In the latter's service, he settled in Danzig, where he returned to his antiquarian studies, editing, besides other work, the *Annolied*. In 1639, while giving alms to a beggar in the street, he was infected with the plague, and within three days was dead.

The collection of Opitz's *Deutsche Poemata* [2] contains,

[1] H. Oesterley's edition of Opitz (D.N.L., 27), 271.

[2] Selections ed. by J. Tittmann in *Deutsche Dichter des 17. Jahrh.*, 1, Leipzig, 1869, and by H. Oesterley in D.N.L., 27 [1889]. Cp. on Opitz H. Palm, *Beiträge zur Geschichte der deutschen Literatur des 16. und 17. Jahrh.*, Breslau, 1877, 129 ff.

besides the poems that have already been mentioned, versions of the Psalms, of some Prophets, and "Lobgesänge" on Christ's birth and passion. As a contribution to dramatic literature, he translated Seneca's *Trojanerinnen* (1625) and Sophocles' *Antigone* (1636); he also made the version of Rinuccini's mythological opera *Dafne*, which, with Heinrich Schütz's music, was the first Italian opera to be performed in Germany (1627). Finally, with translations of Barclay's political novel, *Argenis* (1626), and of Sir Philip Sidney's *Arcadia* (1629), he contributed his share to the development of German fiction. With the latter work, the doors were thrown open to the pastoral poetry of the Renaissance; and, in 1630, Opitz followed up his translations with an original *Schäfferey von der Nimfen Hercine*, which is partly in prose and partly in verse. The scene of this interesting adaptation of the Italian pastoral to the scenery and fairy-lore of the North is laid in the Riesengebirge.

Translations of Seneca and Sophocles.

Die Nimfe Hercine, 1630.

By no canon of criticism can Opitz's poetry be given a high place in literary history: in order, however, to appreciate Opitz fairly, we must view him, not from a modern standpoint, but from that of his own century. A writer who, for a hundred years, was accepted by his countrymen as their representative poet, must have some genius. The bulk of his verse was written, it is true, according to mechanical rules, but it is not all uninspired: some of it will even bear comparison with that of such genuine poets as Dach and Fleming. He has been called "the father of German poetry," and not unjustly, for he was first to carry into practice those principles of form and style without which poetry would not have reached the classical perfection of the later eighteenth century.

Like the pioneers of the Renaissance in other lands, Opitz led the way not only by practice but by precept. The *Buch von der deutschen Poeterey* (1624),[1] to which his *Aristarchus* had been a preliminary study, is the most important German book of the seventeenth century. Not that this *ars poetica* of Opitz's was any more original than his poetry; but it was the right book at the right moment, and, for more than a hundred years—until the ap-

Das Buch von der deutschen Poeterey, 1624.

[1] *Neudrucke*, 1, 2nd ed., Halle, 1882; also edited together with the *Aristarchus* by G. Witkowski, Leipzig, 1888. Cp. K. Borinski, *Die Poetik der Renaissance*, Berlin, 1886, 56 ff.

pearance of Gottsched's *Critische Dichtkunst*—it remained the accepted literary canon of German poetry. No work could be more of a compilation than the *Buch von der deutschen Poeterey:* in almost every sentence the author betrays his indebtedness to earlier theorists, to Horace, Scaliger, Ronsard, the French "Pleiade," and the Dutch poet Heinsius—and even in Germany itself Opitz was not without forerunners. He borrowed, for instance, from a *Sinnreiches poetisches Büchlein* (1616) by Ernst Schwabe von der Heyde, a writer who stood in touch with the older Heidelberg circle, but as the *Büchlein* is lost, it is not known to what extent.[1] Original or not, however, the *Buch von der deutschen Poeterey* contained many healthy lessons for the literature of its day: it set up in place of the meaningless syllable-counting which had come down from the Meistersingers, genuine principles of versification; it combated the use and abuse of Latin words in the language, and insisted upon the creation of one normal High German form of literary speech. The different species of poetical composition are enumerated and described, while the art of poetry as a whole is regarded as an imitation of nature:—

"Man soll auch wissen, das die gantze Poeterey im nachäffen der Natur bestehe, vnd die dinge nicht so sehr beschreibe wie sie sein, als wie sie etwan sein köndten oder solten. Es sehen aber die menschen nicht alleine die sachen gerne, welche an sich selber eine ergetzung haben . . . sondern sie hören auch die dinge mit lust erzehlen, welche sie doch zue sehen nicht begehren. . . . Dienet also dieses alles zue vberredung vnd vnterricht auch ergetzung der Leute; welches der Poeterey vornemster zweck ist."[2]

But Opitz also fell into errors which none of the theorists of the Renaissance was able to avoid: he set up as the principles of poetic art, certain rules which had been arrived at by analysing the masterpieces of poetry, and required no more of a poet than a careful observance of these rules. Thus the scholar well versed in Latin and Greek literature, and consequently familiar with the best models, was the true poet,[3] and had but to imitate Homer, Virgil, or Horace to be able himself to rival them.

Opitz's triumph, however, was complete; not Boileau him-

[1] Cp. P. Schultze in *Archiv für Litteraturgeschichte*, 14 (1886), 241 ff.
[2] G. Witkowski's edition, 138 f.
[3] *Ibid.*, 147.

self, in the following generation, won over the literary *élite* of his nation so completely as Opitz with his *Buch von der deutschen Poeterey*. Single-handed, he inaugurated a literary revolution such as no German before or after him achieved; he was the greatest innovator in the history of German letters. The literature of his country, such as it was in the seventeenth century, was brought by him under the sway of the Latin Renaissance.

The principal agencies for the dissemination of Opitz's reforms were the numerous literary societies which sprang up in the first half of the century. They, too, were a result of the Latin Renaissance, being modelled on the Florentine "Accademia della Crusca" or "Bran" Academy, which received its name on the fantastic ground that it was formed to purify the Italian language from barbarisms, as flour is purified from bran. The first of these German societies, the "Fruchtbringende Gesellschaft," or, as it was called later on, "die Gesellschaft des Palmenordens,"[1] was called into existence in 1617, under the auspices of Prince Ludwig of Anhalt. Its childishly fantastic organisation, which seems incompatible with serious or scientific aims, was also taken over from the Florentine model. Each of the members of the Italian Academy assumed a name associated with the business of grinding or baking, and, in the same way, the members of the "Fruchtbringende Gesellschaft" assumed names which stood in some fanciful connection with the "fructifying" object of the society: Prince Ludwig, for instance, was "der Ernährende"; others were "der Helffende," "der Unverdrossene," "der Grade," "der Wohlriechende," and so on, and each member was supplied with a coat of arms corresponding to his assumed title. The arms of the society consisted of a cocoanut palm with the motto, "Alles zu Nutzen." Under this playful guise, the "Fruchtbringende Gesellschaft" set about purifying and ennobling the "hochteutsche Sprache." Insignificant as were the scholarly results of its activity, it must at least be said to the credit of the "Palmenorden" that one of its members, Justus Georg Schottelius ("der Suchende," 1612-76), was the author of the best grammatical work of the seventeenth century, the *Ausführliche Arbeit von der teutschen Haubt Sprache* (1663).

The "Fruchtbringende Gesellschaft," founded 1617.

[1] F. W. Barthold, *Die fruchtbringende Gesellschaft*, Berlin, 1848.

Other societies

Societies similar to the "Palmenorden" sprang up, one in Strassburg, another in Hamburg, the latter founded by Philipp von Zesen (1619-89), who exceeded all bounds in his naïve attempt to Germanise foreign words on the basis of impossible etymologies: he even went so far as to invent German equivalents for the proper names of antiquity. It was not long, however, before Zesen's "teutschgesinnte Genossenschaft"—the members of which took the names of flowers—found a rival in the "Elbschwanenorden" of the Hamburg laureate, Johann Rist. The most famous of all these societies was "Der gekrönte Blumenorden," of Nürnberg, or "die Gesellschaft der Schäfer an der Pegnitz," which was founded in 1644 by Georg Philipp Harsdörffer (1607-58) and Johann Klaj or Clajus (1616-56). The "Pegnitz Shepherds" devoted more attention to literature than the "Palmenorden" had done. Harsdörffer,[1] himself a graduate of the older society, is an example of the absurdity to which the entire movement led. He is credited with no less than forty-seven volumes of poetry, of which the most famous is the *Poetische Trichter, die Teutsche Dicht- und Reimkunst, ohne Behuf der lateinischen Sprache, in sechs Stunden einzugiessen*, or more shortly, *Der Nürnberger Trichter* (1647-53). This work is a kind of *ars poetica*, which, as may be inferred from the title, carries the principles of Opitz, in all seriousness, to absurdity. Another work of Harsdörffer's, *Frauenzimmer Gesprech-Spiele* (1641-49), an encyclopedia for ladies in dialogue-form, was also a widely read book in its day. His partner, Klaj, who was a pastor, attempted to reform the Passion Plays on Opitzian lines, but with still more ridiculous results. The best that can be said of these literary societies is that they created an interest among the upper classes for German poetry. After all, they were symptoms of literary impotence, and not, like the equally fantastic "Gelehrtenrepublik" of Klopstock in the next century, an exuberance of literary strength.

"Der gekrönte Blumenorden," founded 1644.

G. P. Harsdörffer, 1607-58.

The Königsberg poets.

In Königsberg, a group of poets, who endeavoured to put Opitz's reforms into practice, occupy a more prominent place in the literature of the century than the "Pegnitz Shepherds";

[1] Cp. *Festschrift zur 250-jährigen Jubelfeier des Pegnesischen Blumenordens*, Nürnberg, 1894 (contains a monograph on Harsdörffer by T. Bischoff). Cp. K. Borinski, *l.c.*, 181 ff.

with Opitz, the vital movement in German literature had clearly passed to the north. The leading poet—we might say the only poet—of this circle was Simon Dach (1605-59),[1] a native of Memel. Dach's life was in itself not more of a struggle than the lives of others among his contemporaries, but to his yielding, unenergetic character it seemed one long tragedy. Death and resignation are the constant themes of his religious poetry, and even in the "Tanzlieder" and "Hochzeitsgedichte," the dominant tone is elegiac. But Dach had the true lyric inspiration; his feeling for rhythm and metre stood him in better stead than any theories. The greater number of his poems — he was Professor of Poetry in Königsberg from 1639 on—were written to order, to celebrate weddings, deaths, and the like, but they do not suffer from this disadvantage. His finest verses, as those, for instance, beginning with the following strophe, were occasional :— Simon Dach, 1605-59.

"Jetzt schlaffen Berg' und Felder
Mit Reiff und Schnee verdeckt,
Auch haben sich die Wälder
In ihr weiss Kleid versteckt;
Die Ströme stehn geschlossen
Und sind in stiller Ruh,
Die lieblich sonst geflossen
Mit Lauffen ab und zu;"[2]

and the well-known poem, *Anke von Tharau*, which Herder included in his collection of *Volkslieder*, was written for the wedding of an East Prussian pastor's daughter.

A poet of a very different stamp was the Saxon, Paul Fleming.[3] While Dach was resigned and melancholy, the latter was full of vigour. Fleming, it has been well said, is the poet of life, Dach the singer of death; Fleming writes in a major-key, Dach in a minor one.[4] Born at Hartenstein P. Fleming, 1609-40.

[1] Ed. H. Oesterley (Stuttg. Litt. Ver., 130), 1876; also by the same editor in *Deutsche Dichter des 17. Jahrh.*, 9, Leipzig, 1876, and in D.N. L., 30 [1883]. This last-mentioned volume also contains specimens of the lyrics of Dach's Königsberg friends, R. Roberthin (1600-48), H. Albert (1604-51), &c., also of his successor in the Königsberg chair of poetry, Johann Röling (1634-79). Cp. *Neudrucke*, 44-48, Halle, 1883-84.

[2] H. Oesterley's edition (D.N.L., 30), 129.

[3] Ed. J. M. Lappenberg (Stuttg. Litt. Ver., 73, 82, 83), 1863-65; selections by J. Tittmann (*Deutsche Dichter des 17. Jahrh.*, 2), Leipzig, 1870, and H. Oesterley in D.N.L., 28 [1885]. A translation of *Ausgewählte lateinische Gedichte von P. Fleming*, by C. Kirchner, Halle, 1901.

[4] H. Oesterley, *l.c.*, 10.

in 1609, Fleming's life was full of adventure and strange experiences. He began by studying medicine in Leipzig, but soon discovered his poetic talent. Had it not, however, been for the influence of Opitz, he would probably have only written Latin verses; as it is, Latin poems make up more than a third of his writings. He had hardly finished his university career when the war compelled him to leave Leipzig; the town was plundered and the plague broke out. Fleming took the opportunity of accompanying his friend Adam Olearius (1603-71) on a journey to Russia and Persia. The journey lasted six years and the travellers penetrated into the unknown East as far as Ispahan. Olearius described the journey in his *Beschreibung der newen Orientalischen Reise* (1647),[1] while Fleming celebrated the dangers and adventures they came through, in verse. Although Fleming himself was little influenced by the Oriental literature for which Olearius endeavoured to create a taste by translations, the novelty of his experiences gave a piquant flavour to his poetry. After his return, Fleming resolved to settle in Reval as a physician. He went to Leyden to study, but as he was on the way back, he died suddenly in Hamburg on the 2nd of April 1640. His *Geist- und Weltliche Poemata* were first collected and published after his death.

A. Olearius, 1603-71.

In technical respects, Fleming was an unconditional follower of his master Opitz, and, like all the poets of Opitz's school, he relied much on foreign models. Occasionally, an echo is to be heard in his verse of the Volkslied and the Minnesang — that parallelism of human life with nature which is so characteristic of the German lyric — but it is only for a moment; he always returns with preference to the more familiar forms and imagery of classical poetry. Fleming remained a poet of the Renaissance, but he was raised above the flock of Opitz's disciples by the fact that his poems, although clothed in artificial forms, always spring from actual experiences and feelings. Manly and sincere by nature, Fleming was also not the poet to spend his life in the quest for liberal patrons; and on his deathbed in Hamburg, showed that he was conscious of not having lived in vain :—

[1] Cp. D.N.L., 28, 229 ff.

"Ich war an Kunst und Gut und Stande gross und reich,
des Glückes lieber Sohn, von Eltern guter Ehren,
frei, meine, kunte mich aus meinen Mitteln nähren,
mein Schall floh über weit, kein Landsman sang mir gleich,
von Reisen hochgepreist, für keiner Mühe bleich,
jung, wachsam, unbesorgt. Man wird mich nennen hören,
bis dass die letzte Glut diss Alles wird verstören." [1]

J. Rist, 1607-67.

The drama, in which Opitz was aware of his own shortcomings, was still without a representative. Johann Rist (1607-67),[2] the founder of the Hamburg "Elbschwanenorden," and a lyric poet who, with more concentration, might have rivalled Dach and Fleming, had, it is true, written plays, but they were hardly in accordance with Opitz's standard of good taste. The dialogue, for instance, was in prose, and comic episodes were introduced in which the peasants spoke "Plattdeutsch." As Rist's dramatic work is for the most part lost, we are unable to say whether he wrote much or little, but, in any case, his plays seem to have been more akin to the Nürnberg Fastnachtsspiel than to the drama of the Latin Renaissance. The real dramatist who filled the vacant place in the literature of the seventeenth century was Gryphius.

A. Gryphius, 1616-64.

Andreas Gryphius[3]—originally Greif—was born at Glogau, in Silesia, in 1616, the year of Shakespeare's death, and he died in 1664, a hundred years after the English poet was born. Early orphaned, his youth was an unhappy one, but his poetic talent overcame all obstacles, and, before the age of seventeen, he had written an epic in Latin hexameters on Herod and the Slaughter of the Innocents (*Herodis furiæ et Rachelis lacrymæ*, 1634). A noble patron, Pfalzgraf Georg von Schönborn, seems to have provided him with the means of studying at the University of Leyden. In Holland he spent six years, studying and teaching; here also he became familiar with the dramas of the leading Dutch dramatists, Hooft and Vondel. A journey to France and Italy followed, in the course of which he wrote a Latin epic on the Passion, *Olivetum* (1646), which he solemnly pre-

[1] H. Oesterley's edition (D.N.L., 28), 98.

[2] *Dichtungen*, herausg. von K. Goedeke und E. Goetze (*Deutsche Dichter des 17. Jahrh.*, 15), Leipzig, 1885.

[3] Ed. H. Palm (Stuttg. Litt. Ver., 138, 162, 171), 1879-83, also a selection by the same editor in D.N.L., 29 [1883], and by J. Tittmann, in *Deutsche Dichter des 17. Jahrh.*, 4 and 14, Leipzig, 1870-80. Cp. L. G. Wysocki, *Andreas Gryphius et la tragédie allemande au XVII siècle*, Paris, 1893.

sented to the Republic of Venice. In the following year, 1647, he returned to Silesia, married, and settled down to a quiet life; in 1650 he was made Syndic of the principality of Glogau, a position which he held until his death.

Andreas Gryphius is an excellent type of the Germanic poet, and, under more favourable conditions, might have taken a high place in the national literature. In his religious lyric he appears as an earnest thinker, inclined to brood over the tragic aspects of life. The *Son- undt Feyrtags-Sonnete* (1639), written in Holland, have all the passionate fervour of Luther's hymns, and show what a serious matter Protestantism was to him. The spirit of these lyrics is wholly German, only the form is of the Renaissance; but just in that form Gryphius shows himself a master: he handles the sonnet with as much ease as the familiar metre of the Volkslied. In the later *Oden*, and especially in the *Thränen über das Leiden Jesu Christi* (1652), and *Kirchhoffs-Gedancken* (1656), his religious earnestness gives place to melancholy.

Son- undt Feyrtags-Sonnete, 1639.

Kirchhoffs-Gedancken, 1656.

It was only natural in a century so rich in religious poetry as the seventeenth, that Gryphius should owe his reputation less to his hymns than to his other work. As a dramatist, he was virtually without a rival. His first tragedy had for its subject the Byzantine Emperor *Leo Armenius* (1646, published 1650); and it was followed by *Catharina von Georgien*, the tragedy of a Christian martyr in Persia. In *Ermordete Majestät; oder Carolus Stuardus, König von Gross-Britannien* (first published 1657, but written in 1649), Gryphius had the courage to dramatise an event that had only just taken place, namely, the trial and execution of Charles I. of England. He was fond of sanguinary themes, and loved to thrill his audience with the terrors of the supernatural: in *Carolus Stuardus*, for instance, the chorus, which was introduced in accordance with the dramatic theories of the Renaissance, is made up of the murdered kings of England, who appear as ghosts. The most characteristic of all his tragedies, however, is *Cardenio vnd Celinde* (ca. 1648). The choice of this subject, which the author himself feared was almost too humble for the purposes of tragedy, points to the abiding influence of the "Englischen Comödianten." Like so many of the pieces in the repertories of these

His tragedies.

Cardenio vnd Celinde, ca. 1648.

actors, *Cardenio vnd Celinde* is based upon an Italian novel, but Gryphius's dramatisation shows very modest stagecraft compared with that of his English models. Cardenio is a Spanish student of Bologna, who, from disappointed love for the virtuous Olympia, resolves to murder her husband; he is loved by Celinde, who determines to keep him faithful to her by means of magic. The theme of the drama proper is to show how, by the interposition of supernatural powers, Celinde is cured of her passion and Cardenio of his evil intentions. Now and then, there is a touch of real tragic poetry in this first German "bürgerliche Schauspiel," but the fact that at least three of the five "Abhandelungen" or acts consist merely of narrative monologues, shows how rudimentary was the poet's idea of dramatic construction. As a drama, *Cardenio vnd Celinde* is, after all, little in advance of the work of Hans Sachs. From the tragedy of the Renaissance, as Gryphius found it in Vondel, his Dutch model, he had gained no more than a few technical hints and a taste for the supernatural.

His comedies.

Contrary to what might be expected of so sombre-minded a poet, Gryphius is to be seen to more advantage in his comedies than in his tragedies. In the "Schimpfspiel," *Absurda comica, oder Herr Peter Squentz*, and in its companion "Scherzspiel," *Horribilicribrifax*, he displays a fresh original humour which is in strange contrast to the melancholy tone of the *Kirchhoffs-Gedancken*. These plays, both of which were written before 1650, although not published until long after, are unquestionably the best German dramas of the seventeenth century. *Herr Peter Squentz* is a version of the comic episodes in the *Midsummer Night's Dream* with which Gryphius had become familiar either through performances of English actors, or, what is more likely, through a Dutch version. The better of the plays is the second, which was probably also based on an earlier model: its hero—a bragging soldier—was a favourite type with the dramatists of the Renaissance. Gryphius appears here as a master of that witty caricature which was first developed by the Italians in their *commedia dell' arte*. It is greatly to the advantage of both these comedies that they are written not in the stilted Alexandrines of the tragedies, but in prose. In other plays, such as the

"Gesangs- und Scherz-Spiele," *Das verliebte Gespenst* and *Die geliebte Dornrose* (1660), adaptations respectively of a French and Dutch original, the lyric element predominates and weakens the dramatic effect. On the whole, Gryphius is at his best in *Horribilicribrifax;* it is in this farce, rather than in his ambitious tragedies, that he takes an honourable place in the history of the German drama.

CHAPTER VII.

RELIGIOUS POETRY; EPIGRAM AND SATIRE.

ALTHOUGH almost all the poets who accepted Opitz's theories wrote verses on religious themes, it was only exceptionally, as in the case of Fleming and Gryphius, that the religious feeling was deep or genuine enough to conceal the mechanism of the poet's art. The most gifted religious poet of Silesia at this time had little sympathy for the ideals of the first Silesian School, and held aloof from Opitz and his friends. Johann Scheffler, or, to give him the name by which he is best known, Angelus Silesius (1624 - 77), was a physician in Breslau, who, to the consternation of his family and fellow-citizens, went over in 1653 to the Catholic faith, and, eight years later, became a priest. His recantation of Protestantism was rooted in a revival of that mysticism which, as we have seen, had been a forerunner of the Reformation in the fifteenth century. The virile common-sense of Luther's Protestantism had not been favourable to the self-abnegating spirit of mysticism, and this spirit played a subordinate part in the life of the sixteenth century. But as soon as Lutheranism began to stiffen into a system of dogmas, mysticism again came into favour. In 1612 Jakob Böhme (1575-1624), a shoemaker of Görlitz, published his first book, *Aurora, oder Morgenröthe im Aufgang*, which preached a strange mystic philosophy, and exerted an influence which had not spent itself at the close of the eighteenth century. Böhme's ideas found an enthusiastic advocate in his fellow-countryman, Abraham von Franckenberg (1593-1652), and from Franckenberg, as well as directly from Böhme and Tauler, Silesius drew his inspiration, thus becoming unconsciously the first messenger of a new epoch in German poetry. The writings of Silesius

Angelus Silesius, 1624-77.

J. Böhme, 1575-1624.

consist of two volumes of poetry, both published in 1657, *Heilige Seelenlust, oder Geistliche Hirten-Lieder der in jhren Jesum verliebten Psyche* and *Geistreiche Sinn- und Schlussreime*, the latter in its second edition (1674) known as *Der Cherubinische Wandersmann*.[1] The former of these collections is written under the influence of the pastoral poetry of the Renaissance; Psyche, the soul, is a shepherdess who sighs for her beloved shepherd, Jesus, and leaves her friends and her flock to follow Him. But the mystic earnestness and sincerity of Silesius prevent his verse from degenerating into the triviality of the religious pastoral. He is at his best in the theosophic "Sprüche" of the *Cherubinische Wandersmann;* with wonderful poetic depth and that clear vision for the spiritual relations of things to be found in all mystic poetry, he pours out the yearning of his soul for union with God. His conception of the universe takes the form of an all-embracing pantheism, which does not shrink from such startling expression as—

Der Cherubinische Wandersmann, 1657.

"Ich weiss, dass ohne mich Gott nicht ein Nu kan leben,
Werd' ich zu nicht, Er muss von Noth den Geist auffgeben.

Dass Gott so seelig ist und Lebet, ohn Verlangen,
Hat Er so wol von mir, als ich von Ihm empfangen.

Ich bin so gross als Gott: Er ist als ich so klein;
Er kan nicht über mich, ich unter Ihm nicht seyn."[2]

Friedrich von Spee, 1591-1635.

The typical representative of religious pastoral poetry at this time was an older poet than Silesius, namely the Rhinelander, Friedrich von Spee (1591-1635). Although a Catholic and a Jesuit, Spee seems to have been a man of wider sympathies than his fellows. He did his utmost to destroy the superstition which condemned alleged witches to the stake, and, indeed, his whole life was embittered by the fact that, as professor in Würzburg, he had within two years to prepare, as their confessor, more than two hundred of these "witches" for their fate. He died of fever caught in the hospital of Trèves while nursing the sick and wounded. In the year before his death he collected his religious poetry for

[1] Ed. G. Ellinger (*Neudrucke*, 135-138), Halle, 1895. Cp. E. Wolff, *Das deutsche Kirchenlied des 16. und 17. Jahrh.* (D.N.L., 31 [1894]), 471 ff.
[2] Book 1, 8-10 (G. Ellinger's edition, 15).

publication under the title, *Trutz-Nachtigal, oder Geistlichs-Poetisch Lust-Waldlein* (1649).[1] "Trutz-Nachtigal," says the poet in his preface, "wird diss Büchlein genandt, weiln es trutz allen Nachtigalen süss, vnd lieblich singet, vnnd zwar aufrichtig Poetisch: also dass es sich auch wol bey sehr guten Lateinischen vnnd anderen Poeten dörfft hören lassen." Spee's poetry has little of the poetic mysticism which makes the *Cherubinische Wandersmann* still interesting to a modern reader; his lyric is essentially of the seventeenth century. But through his tasteless confusion of Christianity and antique mythology breathes a humane religious spirit which is at least sincere; and verses like the following, from a *Liebgesang der Gespons Jesu*, reveal an appreciation for nature which calls to mind the awakening of the nature-sense in German poetry a century later:—

Trutz-Nachtigal, 1649.

"Der trübe winter ist fürbey,
Die Kranich widerkehren;
Nun reget sich der Vogelschrey,
Die Nester sich vermehren;
Laub mit gemach
Nun schleicht an tag;
Die blümlein sich nun melden.
Wie Schlänglein krumb
Gehn lächlend umb
Die bächlein kühl in Wälden." [2]

Although Spee was not familiar with the work or theories of Opitz when he wrote his own poetry, his *ars poetica* was obviously in complete accordance with the *Buch von der deutschen Poeterey;* he, too, independently of Opitz, had come under the stimulus of the new ideals of the Renaissance. A hardly less gifted lyric poet than Spee was another Jesuit, Jakob Balde (1604-88), Court preacher in Munich, but Balde was only at home when he wrote in Latin; his German poems have little merit.

J. Balde, 1604-88.

The national religious lyric in these centuries was a product of Protestantism. Since Luther, there had been no lack of evangelical hymn-writers, but it was late in the seventeenth century before religious poetry reached its highest development. The greatest German hymn-writer was Paul Gerhardt

The Protestant hymn.

[1] Ed. G. Balke (*Deutsche Dichter des 17. Jahrh.*, 13), Leipzig, 1879. Cp. E. Wolff, *l.c.*, 225 ff.
[2] E. Wolff, *l.c.*, 252.

P. Gerhardt, 1607-76.

(1607-76).[1] A native of Gräfenhainichen, near Bitterfeld, Gerhardt studied at Wittenberg; he was then for a time Diakonus of the Church of St Nicolai in Berlin, but being unable to reconcile himself to the efforts made by the Kurfürst of Brandenburg to reconcile the Lutheran and Reformed Church, he had, in consequence, to resign his charge. He spent the last seven years of his life as preacher in Lübben on the Spree. Gerhardt belonged to the old school of Protestant preacher-poets, of whom Luther himself was the model; that is to say, he was, in the first place, a Churchman and only in the second a poet. Some of his hymns appeared in print as early as 1648, but the first collected edition was that of 1667, which bore the title *Geistliche Andachten*. There is nothing that suggests the Renaissance in Gerhardt's poetry; his hymns are what Luther's had been, Volkslieder. The artificial graces of Spee and the mystic spirituality of Silesius are alike absent: he is content to express in the simplest language the unreflecting optimism of the German Protestant "Volk." Earnest religious conviction and unwavering faith breathe from hymns like *Befiehl du deine Wege;* the full-sounding speech of the German Bible, again, re-echoes in the magnificent hymn, based on the Latin, *Salve, caput cruentatum* ("O sacred Head, surrounded By crown of piercing thorn!"), by Bernhard of Clairvaux—

"O Häupt voll Blut und Wunden,
Voll Schmerz und voller Hohn!
O Häupt zu Spott gebunden
Mit einer Dornenkron!
O Häupt, sonst schön gezieret
Mit höchster Ehr und Zier,
Itzt aber hoch schimpfieret:
Gegrüsset seyst du mir!"

Still another and more peaceful side of Gerhardt's religious lyric is to be seen in a poem like—

"Nun ruhen alle Wälder,
Vieh, Menschen, Stadt und Felder,
Es schläft die ganze Welt:
Ihr aber, meine Sinnen,
Auf, auf, ihr sollt beginnen,
Was eurem Schöpfer wolgefällt."[2]

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[1] Ed. K. Goedeke (*Deutsche Dichter*, 12), Leipzig, 1877; also in Reclam's *Universal-Bibliothek*, No. 1741-43, Leipzig, 1884, and E. Wolff, *l.c.*, 127 ff.

[2] E. Wolff, *l.c.*, 135, 139.

Gerhardt was not a pioneer in religious song as Luther had been, but his poetic gifts were finer and more harmonious. His verses are not combative or defiant; that rugged independence of character which stamped everything the Reformer wrote is not to be found in them, but they flow more easily than did the strong if sometimes unmusical lines of Luther. And Gerhardt did not stand alone. The names of many poet-preachers in this age might be cited, not a few of whom wrote hymns which were at once accepted by the people—the ultimate test of such poetry—as the expression of their religious feeling. From the Reformation to the first quarter of the eighteenth century, at least, the purest expression of the German lyric is to be found in the hymn.

Satire, the most virile form of literature in the sixteenth century, plays a comparatively small *rôle* in the seventeenth; or rather, it might be said to have assumed a new form made popular by the Renaissance, that of the Epigram. Friedrich von Logau, Germany's most gifted epigrammatist, was one of those neglected geniuses who are not appreciated at their full worth until generations after they are dead; his reputation virtually dates from 1759, when Ramler and Lessing unearthed and published his epigrams.[1] Born at Brockut, near Nimptsch in Silesia, in 1605, Logau studied jurisprudence and obtained a position in the service of the Duke of Liegnitz. In 1648 he was elected a member of the "Fruchtbringende Gesellschaft" under the name "Der Verkleinernde," and he died at Liegnitz in 1655. In 1638 he published the first sample of his epigrams, *Erstes Hundert Teutscher Reimen-Sprüche;* but it was not until the year before his death that the chief collection followed, under the title, *Salomons von Golaw* (an obvious anagram) *Deutscher Sinn-Getichte Drey Tausend* (1654).[2] Not all of these three thousand epigrams and Sprüche were original, but even when borrowed from Latin and other sources, Logau put his own stamp upon them before they left his hands. Their author makes the impression of having been a wise observer of his time, and it was no small merit to see things clearly

Friedrich von Logau, 1605-55.

[1] See G. E. Lessing's *Sämtliche Schriften*, ed. K. Lachmann, 3rd ed. by F. Muncker, Stuttgart, 1886-1900, 7, 125 ff.

[2] Ed. G. Eitner (Stuttg. Litt. Ver., 113), 1872; also a selection by the same editor in *Deutsche Dichter des 17. Jahrh.*, 3, Leipzig, 1870, and by H. Oesterley in D.N.L., 28 [1885], 135 ff.

in the age of the Thirty Years' War. After the endless blood that had been shed over the rival claims of religions, Logau doubted whether Christ would find credence if He returned to earth. Opitz he praised as a German Virgil, but he had no faith in writing poetry by rule, and held aloof from the Opitzian school. He was a good patriot, and ridiculed mercilessly the aping of French customs and the contempt for the German language, which, a hundred years later, were still the butt of satire.

"Diener tragen in gemein ihrer Herren Lieverey;
Solls dann seyn, dass Frankreich Herr, Deutschland aber Diener sey?
Freyes Deutschland schäm dich doch dieser schnöden Knechterey!"

Or, again:—

"Wer nicht Frantzösisch kan,
Ist kein gerühmter Mann;
Drum mussen wir verdammen,
Von denen wir entstammen,
Bey denen Hertz und Mund
Alleine deutsch gekunt."

In the same way, a favourite theme of Logau's satire is the "alamodischen" (*à la mode*) customs, language, and dress of the higher society of the seventeenth century:—

"Alamode-Kleider, Alamode-Sinnen;
Wie sichs wandelt aussen, wandelt sichs auch innen."[1]

By nature Logau was earnest rather than brillant; he avoided superficial witticism, and meant what he said as seriously as the most bitter satirist. But what more than anything else entitles him to the first place among German epigrammatists is his enormous variety: he writes three thousand epigrams without leaving the impression that he has unnecessarily repeated himself, or ridden any one type of epigram to death. On the whole, he was one of the sanest and manliest figures in the literary history of his time.

J. Lauremberg, 1590-1658.

Another satirist of the *à la mode* was Johann Lauremberg (1590-1658), a native of Rostock, who, under the name "Hans Willmsen L. Rost," wrote in the Plattdeutsch dialect of his home, *Veer Schertz Gedichte, in Nedderdüdisch gerimet* (1652),[2] which were so popular that they were soon translated into High German. Lauremberg was actuated by

[1] H. Oesterley's edition, 162, 176, 190.
[2] Ed. W. Braune (*Neudrucke*, 16, 17), Halle, 1879.

what might be termed a patriotic motive, in writing in Low German; the language in which *Reinke de Vos* was written, seemed to him as literary as the High German dialect which Opitz and his friends favoured. This Low German satirist possessed a kindliness and easy-going Saxon humour, which suggest a comparison with the tamer if more polished Rabener of a later date. In any case, he was much superior to the satirists of Opitz's school, of whom only one, the Low German pastor, Joachim Rachel (1618-69), is worthy of mention. Rachel, originally a disciple of Lauremberg's, began by writing under his influence simple, hearty Volkslieder in his native dialect; but with the six *Satirischen Gedichte*, which he published in 1664, he became the representative satirist of Opitz's school. He was not, like his first master, troubled with patriotic considerations, and saw shrewdly enough that High German was the sure road to success.

J. Rachel, 1618-69.

An interesting comparison of North and South German, of Protestant and Catholic, is afforded by two remarkable preachers of the seventeenth century — Johann Balthasar Schupp or Schuppius (1610-61), a native of Giessen, and Ulrich Megerle, better known as Abraham a Santa Clara (1644-1709), the name he assumed as monk. Santa Clara, who was born near Messkirch, in southern Baden, rose to be court-preacher in Vienna; Schupp was pastor of the church of St Jacobi in Hamburg. As a young man, the latter studied philosophy in Giessen and Marburg, and he left the university with no high opinion of the scholastic methods of teaching, or of student life. He had also wandered, on foot, through the greater part of Northern Europe, and mingled with all classes of men, and in his *Freund in der Noht* (1657)[1] he gave his son the benefit of his own experience in the form of good advice.

J. B. Schupp, 1610-61.

"Ich bin kein gelährter Mann," he tells his son. "Allein, ich kenne die Welt. Ich hab aber gar zu viel Lehr-geld ausgeben, biss ich die Welt hab kennen lernen. Darum bespiegele dich in meinem Exempel, und lerne von mir die Welt kennen. Und wann ich hören werde, dass du wissest einen Unterscheid zu machen, zwischen einem Freund, und einem Complement-macher, so will ich viel von dir halten."[2]

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[1] Ed. W. Braune (*Neudrucke*, 9), Halle, 1878.
[2] W. Braune's edition, 25.

In 1635 Schupp was appointed Professor of History and Rhetoric in Marburg, and, fourteen years later, was called to Hamburg. It was not long, however, before the Hamburg clergy scented a wolf in sheep's clothing; they accused him of introducing satire, jests, and comic anecdotes into his sermons, but Schupp, who had much of Luther's fighting spirit, soon proved himself more than equal to them. His writings (first collected, 1663) are written in a vigorous popular style, which, in its lack of restraint, sometimes reminds us of Fischart; for Opitz and the poets of the Renaissance he had nothing but scorn. His satire, like Logau's, is serious rather than witty, and his standpoint is invariably one of personal experience and conviction. As a preacher, Schupp is seen to most advantage in his powerful impeachment of Hamburg, the *Catechismuspredigt vom dritten Gebot oder Gedenk daran Hamburg* (1656).

Abraham a Santa Clara, 1644-1709.

Abraham a Santa Clara was a man of a different stamp. He had not the learning and experience, the wide human sympathy of his North German brother, but he had more genius, and a brilliant and incisive wit. And in matters of religion, Catholic monk and Protestant preacher naturally stood at opposite poles. Santa Clara's faith sat lightly on his shoulders; he introduced the coarsest anecdotes and witticisms in his sermons; he was ruthless as to the weapons with which he attacked his enemies, and delighted in scurrilous personalities; but he had the art of clothing everything in a light, interesting, and attractive form, which appealed strongly to the South German Catholic. In 1679 Vienna was visited by the plague, and Santa Clara was obliged to suspend for a time his activity as a preacher. He employed his leisure in writing tracts which were published under characteristic titles, such as *Merk's Wien!* (1680), *Lösch Wien!* (1680). The second siege of Vienna by the Turks in 1683 was the occasion of a powerful appeal to his fellow-citizens, *Auf, auf ihr Christen!* (1680),[1] a tract which Schiller took as his model for the sermon of the Capuchin monk in *Wallenstein's Lager*. Again, in the *Grosse Todten Bruderschafft* (1681), the mediæval "Dance of Death" is made the basis of a satire. Santa

[1] Ed. A. Sauer (*Wiener Neudrucke*, 1), 1883.

Clara's chief work, however, is *Judas der Ertzschelm* (1686),[1] which contains the essence of his sermons. *Judas der Ertzschelm*, 1686.

Judas der Ertzschelm is partly a novel, partly a collection of homilies. Each section of the book begins with a short narration, which is followed by what is practically a sermon. The individual parts have little connection with one another, except in so far as the romance itself provides a thread. For the story of Judas, Santa Clara was mainly indebted to the *Legenda aurea* by Jacobus a Voragine, and, in the German writer's hands, it bears considerable resemblance to the romances of the later seventeenth century. The mother of Judas, Ciboria, learns in a dream that the son she will give birth to will be a villain; so she puts the child in a basket and throws it into the sea. The basket ultimately reaches the island of Iscariot, and the child is adopted by the queen of that island. When Judas grows up, he returns to Jerusalem, after having murdered the rightful heir to the throne of Iscariot. In Jerusalem, he unwittingly kills his father and marries his mother. When he learns what he has done, he is filled with repentance and becomes a disciple of Christ. The part he now plays is enlivened by incidents of a similarly romantic nature, and at the close of the book, the soul of Judas is condemned to occupy a place in the lowest quarter of hell, beside Lucifer himself. The sermons in *Judas der Ertzschelm* are, however, more important than its story; Geiler's irony seems here to be mingled with the full-blooded satire of Murner, while the whole is expressed with Fischart's fantastic love of epithets. Santa Clara's work stands thus in a direct line with the characteristically South German literature of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

[1] Ed. F. Bobertag, in D.N.L., 40 [1883]. Cp. T. G. von Karajan, *Abraham a Santa Clara*, Vienna, 1867, and W. Scherer, *Vorträge und Aufsätze*, Berlin, 1874, 147 ff.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE NOVEL IN THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.

THE most important form of German literature in the second half of the seventeenth century was unquestionably the novel. In the preceding centuries, there had existed prose versions of medieval romances and innumerable collections of anecdotes; but, with the possible exception of the novels of Jörg Wickram, fiction, in the modern sense of the word, was unknown. Now, however, with the help of Spanish and French models, the German novel began to assert itself as an independent literary *genre;* in other words, it ceased to be merely a form of satire or didactic literature. At the same time, fiction was more early freed from didactic elements than from satire, and even the greatest novel of the century, *Simplicissimus*, is often satirical in intention. The beginning of what might be described as the transition from satire to novel under Spanish influence is to be seen in the work of an Alsatian, Hans Michael Moscherosch (1601-69).

H. M. Moscherosch, 1601-69.

Moscherosch, whose family was of Spanish origin, studied law in Strassburg, took his degree as *doctor juris* in Geneva, and spent some time in France. He then received an appointment in a small village near Metz, and subsequently at Finstingen on the Saar. For twelve years he was exposed to all the horrors of the war, plundered by both parties, exposed to the plague, and reduced almost to starvation. Finally he sought refuge in Strassburg, where he was appointed secretary to the town. And here he published his chief work, *Wunderliche vnd warhafftige Gesichte Philanders von Sittewald*,[1] of which the first complete edition appeared in

Gesichte Philanders von Sittewald, 1642-43.

[1] A selection ed. F. Bobertag, in D.N.L., 32 [1884]. For this chapter, cp. F. Bobertag, *Geschichte des Romans in Deutschland*, 1, 2, Berlin, 1876-84.

1642 and 1643. At least half of these "Visions" are direct imitations of a collection of "Dreams" (*Sueños*) by the Spanish writer, Francisco de Quevedo, which, however, Moscherosch only knew in a French translation. Moscherosch treated his original as Fischart had treated Rabelais; he made it a receptacle for his own ideas and observations, and the condition of his country gave him more opportunity for satire than Quevedo had found in Spain. In the first of the visions (*Schergen-Teuffel*), Philander is shown the futility of justice; in the second (*Welt-Wesen*), he sees the vanity and hypocrisy of the world; while the third (*Venus-Narren*) is a satire on the "fools of love." The most powerful and imaginative of the visions is that in which Philander finds himself in hell, and sees his contemporaries as *Höllen-Kinder*. In *À la mode Kehraus*, German slavery to things foreign which, as we have seen, had been the favourite butt of satirists all through the century, is once more attacked, and *Soldaten-Leben*, in which Moscherosch obviously draws from his own experiences, gives a repellently realistic picture of the demoralisation of the land during the Thirty Years' War. Moscherosch is less of a novelist than his Spanish original; his hero's adventures only interest him in so far as they afford him an opportunity for satire. As far as originality is concerned, the *Gesichte Philanders* cannot be compared with Fischart's *Gargantua*, but it suffers from the same formlessness and contempt of style; Moscherosch falls into those literary vices of exaggeration and pedantic phraseology which he satirises. But the pictures he calls up are vivid, and the occasional verses scattered through the book are in the vigorous style of the Volkslied.

To the Thirty Years' War was due one significant book, *Simplicius Simplicissimus*, a romance which may be said to form the link between the Middle High German epic and the modern novel. The author of *Simplicissimus* was a writer of many pseudonyms; his real name, however, seems to have been Johann Jakob Christoffel, to which he himself added von Grimmelshausen. He was born about 1624 at Gelnhausen in Hesse, and as a boy of ten was carried off by soldiers and had his first taste of the war. He fought now on the one side, now on the other. In 1646 he is known to have been in Offenburg, where he went over to the Catholic

J. J. Christoffel von Grimmelshausen, ca. 1624-76.

Church, and the last years of his life were spent as bailiff ("Schultheiss") in Renchen on the border of the Black Forest, where he died in 1676. Before writing *Simplicissimus*, Grimmelshausen experimented with *Traumgesichte* similar to those of Moscherosch, and tried his hand at translating a French novel, *Der fliegende Wandersmann nach dem Monde* (1659). Under the influence of the early Spanish picaresque romances which had been translated into German early in the century,[1] he discovered his vocation and became the creator of the German "Schelmenroman." *Der Abentheurliche Simplicissimus Teutsch, Das ist: Die Beschreibung dess Lebens eines seltzamen Vaganten, genant Melchior Sternfels von Fuchshaim, wo und welcher gestalt Er nemlich in diese Welt kommen, was er darinn gesehen, gelernet, erfahren und aussgestanden, auch warumb, er solche wieder freywillig quittirt*[2] was printed at Montbéliard in 1669.

Der Abentheurliche Simplicissimus, 1669.

In the story of Simplicius Simplicissimus's youth there is an unconscious echo of Wolfram's *Parzival*. Of good birth, the boy is brought up in the Spessart by a peasant, whom he believes to be his father. He is a simple child who plays a "Sackpfeife" or bagpipe, and herds his flock in happy innocence. His first glimpse of the world of men comes to him, as it came to Parzival, from soldiers—not, however, courteous knights, but rough cuirassiers who fall upon the village, burn and pillage all they can find, and carry off Simplicissimus, who clings to his bagpipe as his most precious possession. Like Parzival again, he comes to a hermit in the forest,—who, as he only discovers long afterwards, is his own father,—and for two years he sits at the hermit's feet, learning wisdom from him. The hermit dies, and Simplicius once more falls into the hands of soldiers. He is brought to the Governor of Hanau, who learns that he is his own nephew, and makes him his page.

[1] Mendoza's *Lazarillo de Tormes* (1554), the earliest picaresque romance, was translated into German in 1617, but there had appeared, four years earlier, a translation of Aleman's *Guzman de Alfarache* (1599), by Ägidius Albertinus. On Albertinus (1560-1620), who was secretary to Duke Maximilian of Bavaria, and translated extensively from the Spanish, cp. R. von Liliencron in D.N.L., 26 [1883]. A translation of part of *Don Quixote* appeared in 1625, the first complete one in 1683. Cp. A. Schneider, *Spaniens Anteil an der deutschen Litteratur des 16. und 17. Jahrh.*, Strassburg, 1898.

[2] Ed. J. Tittmann (*Deutsche Dichter*, 7, 8), 2nd ed., Leipzig, 1877; R. Kögel in the *Neudrucke*, 19-25, Halle, 1880. The edition in D.N.L. is by F. Bobertag, 33-34 [1882].

But Simplicius is ill adapted for a life of this kind; he is only laughed at, and an attempt is even made to convert him into a court fool by unhinging his mind. One day he is carried off by Croats and experiences all the terrors of the war. Gradually, however, he accommodates himself to their wild mode of life; he becomes a thief and an adventurer. In two comrades, Olivier and Herzbruder, he finds his good and his bad angel, and the fortune of war, in which the lawless soldiers of the time had more faith than in King or Kaiser, favours him. He falls into the hands of the Swedes, but is well treated; he discovers a large treasure, and is inveigled into an unhappy marriage. In the course of further adventures he finds his way to Cologne and Paris, where he flourishes as "beau alman"—*i.e.*, *beau allemand*. Meanwhile, however, he has lost all his wealth, and has no option but to become a soldier again. His old comrade Olivier tempts him to join him in a life of open brigandage; Herzbruder leads him back to his true self. His wife is dead, and he longs for a peaceful life. He buys a farm and marries again, but this marriage is also unhappy, and he seeks consolation in his love for adventure; he goes out once more into the world, penetrating as far as Asia. After three years he returns to his foster father in the Spessart and settles down among his long-forgotten books to a life of meditation and repentance.

That, in rough outlines, is the story of this *Parzival* of the seventeenth century. But it is not easy to convey an idea of the vivid realism and hearty popular tone of the book; and behind the author's mask there is always an earnest face, earnest without the harshness of the satirist. Subsequently, Grimmelshausen was tempted to provide *Simplicissimus* with a *Continuatio oder Schluss desselben*, in which the hero's earlier adventures were surpassed; but only the close of this continuation, where Simplicius retires from the world to a lonely island, is in harmony with the original work. Grimmelshausen himself had higher literary ambitions than to be merely the author of a popular "Schelmenroman." *Simplicissimus* was not refined enough to win him recognition in polite circles, and he attempted a gallant novel in the fashionable style of the time; but realising that his strength did not lie in writing of this kind, he returned to the popular, homely style of his chief

Other writings.

novel. His other *Simplicianische Schriften*,[1] such as *Trutz Simplex, oder Lebensbeschreibung der Ertzbetrügerin und Landstörtzerin Courasche* (ca. 1669), *Der seltzame Springinsfeld* (1670), and *Das wunderbarliche Vogel-Nest* (1672), are also stories of the war, and may be regarded as forming a supplement to *Simplicissimus*.

C. Weise, 1642-1708.

Grimmelshausen is the one novelist of genius in his century; the others do not rise above mediocrity. Christian Weise,[2] for instance (1642-1708), rector of the Gymnasium at Zittau, wrote between 1670 and 1678, while professor in Weissenfels, several satirical novels (*Die drey ärgsten Ertz-Narren*, 1672, and *Die drey Klügsten Leute in der gantzen Welt*, 1675), which, with allowance for the wide gap that separates them from *Simplicissimus*, add to the picture which that work gives of the period. Weise is not naturalistic as Grimmelshausen is; he always writes with a view to improving his readers. If he is satirical, it is in a pointedly didactic way, never humorously and unconsciously. As a poet, however, he appears in a much more favourable light. His *Überflüssige Gedanken der grünenden Jugend* (1668), written in his student days in Leipzig, are, notwithstanding the fact that he looked up to Opitz as his master, strongly reminiscent of the Volkslied. Weise is best remembered by his plays; he was the most prolific dramatist of the century, being credited with no less than fifty-four pieces, of which, however, only about half have been published. As characteristic examples of his work may be mentioned, *Bäuerischer Machiavellus, in einem Lustspiel vorgestellt* (1679), the *Trauerspiel von dem Neapolitanischen Hauptrebellen Masaniello* (1682), and the *Komödie von der bösen Katharina* (1705), the last a long and tedious version of the *Taming of the Shrew*. Weise's ideas of dramatic construction were rudimentary; his plays were, in a literal sense, school dramas, being performed only by scholars, and they are no more theatrical than the Latin School Comedies. But, compared with the stilted Alexandrines of Gryphius and the bombast of Lohenstein, his

[1] *Simplicianische Schriften*, ed. J. Tittmann (*Deutsche Dichter*, 10, 11), Leipzig, 1877; also in D.N.L, ed. F. Bobertag, 35 [1883].

[2] Cp. L. Fulda in D.N.L., 39; Weise's *Die drey ärgsten Ertz-Narren in der gantzen Welt* (1672) is edited by W. Braune in the *Neudrucke*, 12-14, Halle, 1878. Cp. H. Palm, *Beiträge zur Geschichte der deutschen Litteratur des 16. und 17. Jahrh.*, Breslau, 1877, 1 ff.

straightforward, natural prose—shallow and trivial as are the ideas it expresses—was an advance. A more brilliant satirical writer was Christian Reuter (born 1665), the author of *Schelmuffskys warhafftige Curiöse und sehr gefährliche Reisebeschreibung Zu Wasser und Lande* (1696),[1] an admirable forerunner of the braggart romance which attained its classic form in the *Reisen des Freyherrn von Münchhausen* (1786).

C. Reuter's *Schelmuffsky*, 1696.

The modern novel of adventure, foreshadowed in *Simplicissimus*, was a creation of the eighteenth century, and dates from the appearance of Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* in 1719. This novel was at once translated into German, and called forth an enormous number of imitations. There was a *teutscher Robinson*, a *französischer Robinson*, an *italienischer Robinson*, and every country in Germany—Saxony, Silesia, Thuringia, Swabia—had its own *Robinson*. In 1723 appeared a *geistlicher Robinson;* in 1732, a *medizinischer Robinson;* even a *Jungfer Robinson* (1723) and a *böhmische Robinsonin* (1753) are included in the list. The best and most important was the *Wunderlichen Fata einiger Seefahrer, absonderlich Alberti Julii, eines gebohrnen Sachsens und seiner auf der Insel Felsenburg errichteten Colonien*, by J. G. Schnabel, which appeared in four volumes between 1731 and 1743.[2] The confusion of the Thirty Years' War compels the hero, Albertus Julius, to seek a new home in unknown seas; he is ultimately shipwrecked on the island of Felsenburg, where he establishes an ideal state. Chronologically, the "Robinsonaden" belong to the eighteenth, and even to the nineteenth century, for one of the most successful imitations of Defoe's novel, *Der Schweizerische Robinson oder der schiffbrüchige Schweizer-Prediger und seine Familie*, by J. R. Wyss, appeared in Zurich as late as 1812-27. But in the general evolution of European literature, *Robinson Crusoe* and its imitations are rooted in the seventeenth century. They are the first virile expression of the modern spirit of adventure, and give voice for the first time to that repugnance to civilisation and desire for a return to nature which Rousseau made a turning-point in the history of European thought.

The "Robinsonaden."

Insel Felsenburg, 1731-43.

[1] See *Neudrucke* 57-59, 90, 91, Halle, 1885-90. Cp. F. Zarncke, *Christian Reuter*, Leipzig, 1884, and D.N.L., 35, xvi ff.

[2] Cp. A. Kippenberg, *Robinsonaden in Deutschland bis zur Insel Felsenburg*, Hannover, 1892, and H. Ullrich, *Robinson und Robinsonaden*, 1, Weimar, 1898.

The novel of gallant adventures, the dominant type of European fiction in the seventeenth century, found as eager a public in Germany as the "Schelmenromane." Among the translators of French novels of this class, Philipp von Zesen, who has already been mentioned as the founder of a linguistic society in Hamburg, showed the most original talent; he also wrote novels of his own—*Die adriatische Rosemund* (1645),[1] *Assenat* (1670), *Simson, eine Helden- und Liebes-Geschicht* (1679)—which were no less widely read than the imported stories. Another voluminous scribbler of the time, E. W. Happel (1647-90), wrote, in a lumbering style, romances of this class, in which descriptions of different parts of the globe are a prominent feature. He was also the author of nine pseudo-historical novels. A Duke of Brunswick, Anton Ulrich (1633-1714), wrote a *Durchleuchtige Syrerinn Aramena* (1669-73), and a learned novel on the *Römische Octavia* (1677), which also belong to the class of would-be historical romance. Most popular of all, however, was *Des Christlichen Teutschen Gross-Fürsten Herkules und der Böhmischen Königlichen Fräulein Valiska Wunder-Geschichte* (1659-60), by A. H. Bucholtz (1607-71).

Philipp von Zesen, 1619-89.

Other novelists.

The best of these "gallant" novels, if only because the simplest and most skilfully constructed, was the *Asiatische Banise oder blutiges doch mutiges Pegu* (1688),[2] by Heinrich Anshelm von Ziegler (1653-97). The fact that the scene of this romance was laid in the distant East, and that an attempt was made to give tropical colouring to the scenes, lent piquancy to the plot, and some of the characters, especially the villainous Chaumigrem, are vigorously drawn and remained popular types until late in the eighteenth century. The style is bombastic, but not always so absurd as in the curse with which the novel opens:—

H. A. von Ziegler's *Asiatische Banise*, 1688.

"Blitz, donner und hagel, als die rächenden werckzeuge des gerechten himmels, zerschmettere den pracht deiner gold-bedeckten thürme, und die rache der Götter verzehre alle besitzer der stadt: welche den untergang des Königlichen hauses befördert, . . . Wolten die Götter! es könten meine augen zu donner-schwangern wolcken, und diese meine thranen zu grausamen sünd-fluthen werden: Ich wolte mit tausend keulen,

[1] Ed. M. Jellinek (*Neudrucke*, 160-163), Halle, 1899.
[2] Ed. F. Bobertag, in D.N.L., 37 [1883].

als ein feuer-werck rechtmässigen zorns, nach dem hertzen des vermaledeyten blut-hundes werffen, und dessen gewiss nicht verfehlen."

A more marked decadence is to be seen in the work of two writers of the so-called Second Silesian School, from whom Ziegler had learned — Christian Hofmann von Hofmannswaldau (1617-79) and Daniel Casper von Lohenstein (1635-83). Hofmannswaldau[1] grew up under the influence of Opitz, travelled widely, and from Italy brought back the decadent literary art of Guarini and Marino; in 1678, he translated the former's *Pastor fido*. The *concetti* of Marino, and the *estilo culto* of the Spaniard Gongora, were the sources of a disease of style which left deep traces on all the chief European literatures in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries; in England this affected elegance appeared as Euphuism, in France it was cultivated by the *précieuses* of the Hotel Rambouillet. In Germany both Hofmannswaldau and Lohenstein looked up to Marino as an unsurpassable poet, but the popularity of the "liebliche Schreibart" was chiefly due to Hofmannswaldau. His most characteristic work is the *Heldenbriefe* (1680), a collection of love-epistles in verse and prose, which gained for him the title of the German Ovid. Another publication, *Herrn von Hofmannswaldau und anderer Deutschen auserlesene Gedichte*, only contains, it may be noted, a few poems by Hofmannswaldau. The first volume of this work, which appeared in 1695, edited by B. Neukirch, touched, beyond question, the lowest level to which the German lyric ever sank.

C. H. von Hofmannswaldau, 1617-79.

Hofmannswaldau's disciple, Lohenstein,[2] was the dramatist of the Second Silesian School. Gryphius was naturally the model that lay nearest Lohenstein's hand, and by his fifteenth year he had written a tragedy, *Ibrahim Bassa* (first published in 1685), which, in accumulation of horror and excess, left Gryphius far behind. The further he advanced, the more Lohenstein revelled in blood, incest, and cruelty. He adapted even themes like *Cleopatra* (1661) and *Sophonisbe* (published 1680) to his purposes, but the plots of tragedies such as *Epicharis* (1665) and *Agrippina* (1665) were more congenial

D. C. von Lohenstein, 1635-83.

[1] Selections ed. F. Bobertag, in D.N.L., 36 [1885], 1 ff. Cp. J. Ettlinger, *C. Hofman von Hofmanswaldau*, Halle, 1891.

[2] *Cleopatra*, ed. F. Bobertag, in D.N.L., 36, 111 ff., a selection from *Arminius und Thussnelda* in D.N.L., 37, 462 ff.

to him. The novel which Lohenstein published in 1689-90 under the title *Grossmüthiger Feldherr Arminius, oder Herrmann als ein tapferer Beschirmer der deutschen Freiheit nebst seiner durchläuchtigsten Thussnelda in einer sinnreichen Staats-, Liebes- und Helden-Geschichte . . . vorgestellet*, is by no means so lacking in good taste as his dramas. It is long, tedious, and learned; it is didactic and persistently patriotic; but the narrative is written with skill and events are vividly described. The author is at his best when he is carried away by his interest in what he has to tell, and forgets the rules of his *ars poetica*. On the whole, Lohenstein's talents show to much more advantage in his novel than in his plays, and had he been born in a more auspicious age, he might have produced work of permanent worth.

Arminius, 1689-90.

The faint light of the German Renaissance had thus flickered out before the seventeenth century reached its close. Intellectually, it was certainly not a glorious century in Germany's development, yet there had been many elements of promise in it. What might have happened had the nation been spared the desolation of the Thirty Years' War, it would be difficult to say, but it is certain that the political conditions produced by the war retarded the growth of German literature by at least fifty years. The main fact is that the German people fell into a slavish imitation of the customs and ideas of the Romance nations. That this period of imitation lasted so long was, in general, due to the untoward political conditions; but there was also, perhaps, another reason: the Germans of the seventeenth century were more anxious to imitate than to learn; they overlooked the fact that they were only in a backward state of development compared with the other nations of Europe. The consequence was that until nearly the middle of the succeeding century, German thought and German literature suffered under the disadvantages of an inward pride and an excessive self-esteem.

PART IV.

THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

CHAPTER I.

RATIONALISM AND ENGLISH INFLUENCE.

At the close of the seventeenth century none, even among the smaller nationalities of Europe, was intellectually so insignificant as that which spoke the German tongue. Renaissance and Reformation had brought glory to France and England; to Germany they had, as we have seen, brought only the veriest beginnings of a national literature, and these beginnings were soon swept away by the storms of the Thirty Years' War. The year 1700 found France still full of pride in her *grand siècle*, and England looking forward rather than back. Rationalism, the logical development of that empiricism first taught by Bacon, had found able champions in Locke and the English Deists, and was established before long as the philosophic faith of France. Again, the eighteenth century was still young when individualism, a movement of even more far-reaching consequences for the history of literature, originated in England; and on the individualism of English thinkers and writers, Rousseau set the stamp of cosmopolitanism. Compared with such vigorous intellectual activity in England and France, all that Germany had to show until past the middle of the eighteenth century was as nothing; her literature had hardly vigour enough to imitate with success—not to speak of rivalling—the productions of her neighbours.

The eighteenth century.

And yet this nation, which, in 1700, lay thus prostrate, possessed undreamt-of germs of spiritual vitality. With phenomenal rapidity, Germany passed through a period of rationalism, then assimilated the best ideas of English and French individualism, and, before the century had reached

its close, produced a philosophy and a literature not unworthy to be placed beside the best of modern Europe. The helpless Germany of 1700 had, in 1800, become a leading intellectual power. No nation was ever more in debt than was Germany to France and England for nearly three-quarters of the eighteenth century; none repaid a debt more generously than Germany hers in the last quarter of that century.

The first indication of a revival of intellectual life before the period under consideration began, was a breath of Cartesianism which, coming from Holland, agitated slightly the surface of the stagnant Lutheran theology. Then Spinoza's philosophy, which left, however, deeper traces behind it, passed over Germany, and, finally, as a kind of protest against the strictness of Protestant orthodoxy, a wave of that Pietism with which, a generation earlier, Jakob Böhme had infused new vigour into religious life. The chief representative of German Pietism at the close of the seventeenth century was an Alsatian, Philipp Jakob Spener (1635-1705),[1] whose *Pia Desideria* (1675) formed the basis for the revival. But German Pietism, unlike English Puritanism, with which it may, in many respects, be compared, was not a militant faith; its watchword was renunciation, its thoughts were fixed on the millennium; its meekness was little adapted to stir the nation to intellectual achievement. The hymns and religious poetry of Spener himself, of Joachim Neander (1650-80), of Gerhard Tersteegen (1697-1769), of the prolific Graf von Zinzendorf (1700-60), strike an intensely personal note: they have often the sweetness of love-poetry, but their spirit is essentially passive. The only work of real importance called forth by Pietism was the *Unpartheyische Kirchen- und Ketzerhistorie* (1698-1700) by Gottfried Arnold (1666-1714), a book which, even in Goethe's youth, had not wholly lost its interest. In the universities, the chief representative of the movement was Spener's chief scholar, A. H. Francke (1663-1727), who, as professor in Halle from 1692 onwards, exerted a far-reaching influence on German educational methods.

Pietism.

P. J. Spener, 1635-1705.

The chief German pioneer of intellectual progress in the period under consideration was Samuel Pufendorf (1632-94),

[1] A. Ritschl, *Geschichte des Pietismus*, 3 vols., Bonn, 1880-86, 2, 95 ff.

who built up his system of "natural law" upon the ideas of Hugo Grotius and Hobbes. And it was as a disciple of Pufendorf that Christian Thomasius (1665-1728), the first German rationalist, began his career as a teacher in the University of Leipzig. Filled with the ideals of the new humanism, Thomasius endeavoured to bring the universities into closer touch with the national life: this was the object he had in view when, in 1687-88, he delivered in Leipzig the first course of lectures in the German tongue that had ever been held in a university. Besides lecturing in German, he also wrote in German, and, in 1688 and 1689, published the first German monthly journal, *Scherz- und ernsthafte, vernünftige und einfältige Gedanken über allerhand lustige und nützliche Bücher und Fragen*, a forerunner of the voluminous literature which, twenty-five or thirty years later, was modelled on the English *Spectator*.

C. Thomasius, 1665-1728.

A more universal genius than Thomasius, and, in the history of philosophy, a vastly more important figure, is Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz (1646-1716),[1] the first of the great German thinkers. Leibniz, who, like Thomasius, was a native of Leipzig, shared the latter's humanistic ideals, and his philosophic system (*Nouveaux Essais sur l'entendement humain*, 1704; *Essais de Théodicée sur la bonté de Dieu, la liberté de l'homme et l'origine du mal*, 1710; *Monadologie*, 1714) was, in its conciliating optimism, more akin to the idealism of Plato than to the English philosophy of Locke. He endeavoured to bridge over the dualism in the universe which Descartes' philosophy had accentuated, to establish a harmony between matter and spirit. To effect this harmony, he set up the hypothesis that the ultimate constituents of matter were what he called "monads," that is, ideal atoms endowed with spiritual potentiality. But besides being a metaphysician, Leibniz had spacious plans for the advancement of German culture and learning; it was through his influence that the Berlin Academy was founded in 1700, and although he himself wrote for the most part in Latin and French, he advocated, in his *Unvorgreiffliche Gedanken, betreffend die Ausübung und Verbesserung der Teutschen Sprache* (1697), the

G. W. Leibniz, 1646-1716.

[1] The philosophical writings of Leibniz are best edited by C. J. Gerhardt, 7 vols., Berlin, 1875-90. Cp. K. Fischer, *Leibniz und seine Schule*, 3rd ed., Heidelberg, 1890.

use of the German language. It cannot be said that his philosophy had any immediate effect on the development of German letters, but he quickened the intellectual life of his time, and deepened and spiritualised the rationalism of English and French thinkers. In the writings of Germany's representative rationalist at the beginning of the eighteenth century, Christian von Wolff (1679-1754), the influence of Leibniz is conspicuous. With Wolff, who was professor in Halle, the work which Thomasius had begun was carried another step forward; the new philosophy crystallised in Wolff's hands into a kind of modern scholasticism, and under this form triumphed over the orthodox theology. From Halle, rationalism spread rapidly through all the German universities.

C. von Wolff, 1679-1754.

As the seventeenth century drew to its close, Germany was gradually coming into closer touch with both France and England. The efforts of the first Silesian school to create a literature modelled on that of the French Renaissance, had, as has been shown, soon degenerated into the bombast of the second school. But at the close of the seventeenth century and the beginning of the eighteenth, the attempt was again made to stay the deterioration of German poetry by re-establishing relations with French literature. The younger writers of this time had before them, instead of the French Renaissance, to which Opitz looked for his models, the most brilliant epoch in all French literature; but this advantage availed them little. The literary achievements of these opponents of the second Silesian school were even more mediocre than the poetry of the first school. Rudolf von Canitz (1654-99), Benjamin Neukirch (1665-1729),[1] Johann von Besser (1654-1729), J. V. Pietsch (1690-1733)—whom Gottsched eulogised as the first poet of the age—and J. U. von König (1688-1744), with their tedious odes, written according to the letter of Boileau's *Art poétique*, and their epics,—deserts without an oasis of poetry,—hardly deserve to be called poets at all. The most that can be said of them is that they had sufficient taste to prevent them falling into the absurd extravagance of their immediate predecessors.

Opponents of the second Silesian school.

[1] A selection from Canitz and Neukirch in *Die Gegner der zweiten schlesischen Schule*, ed. L. Fulda, 2 (D.N.L., 39 [1883]), 383-504.

Historically their chief interest for us is that they formed the literary *milieu* in which Gottsched grew up. Among them, however, was one genuine poet, Johann Christian Günther,[1] who was born at Striegau in Silesia in 1695. Unhappy love affairs, thwarted ambitions and dissipation, which brought him into bitter conflict with his father, made up Günther's life, and he died in 1723, before he had completed his twenty-eighth year; the first collection of his *Gedichte* appeared in 1724. Günther was too much a child of his age not to respect Boileau, but his own tragic experiences taught him the best part of his art. From the Volkslied, too—which at this very time rose to *Prinz Eugen der edle Ritter*—he learned to be simple, although he might perhaps have learned still more. Notwithstanding the unfavourable conditions under which he lived and wrote, verses came from his pen which, in depth and purity of lyrical feeling, had not been surpassed in the previous century by Dach or Fleming.

J. C. Günther, 1695-1723.

"Will ich dich doch gerne meiden,
Gieb mir nur noch einen Kuss,
Eh ich sonst das letzte leiden
Und den Ring zerbrechen muss.
Fühle doch die starken Triebe
Und des Herzens bange Qual!
Also bitter schmeckt die Liebe
So ein schönes Henkermahl."[2]

In lines like these, Günther found again the thread of the German love-lyric, which had been lost since the decay of the Minnesang; he is the most gifted lyric poet in modern German literature before the appearance of Klopstock.

In the last quarter of the seventeenth century the first permanent German opera-house had been established in Hamburg. It was conducted with much tasteless and senseless extravagance, but it produced the operas of musicians like R. Keiser (1674-1739) and G. F. Händel (1685-1759), and formed a centre for poets of the school of Hofmannswaldau, who were employed in the preparation and translation of opera texts. But the position of these poets in Hamburg was by no means secure, and their bitterest critic,

[1] Ed. L. Fulda, *l.c.*, 1 (D.N.L., 38 [1883]); also by J. Tittmann in *Deutsche Dichter des 17. Jahrh.*, 6, Leipzig, 1874, and by B. Litzmann in Reclam's *Universal-Bibliothek*, 1295-96.

[2] D.N.L., 38, 211.

C. Wernigke, 1661-1725.

Christian Wernigke (1661-1725)[1] an epigrammatist with something of the genius of Logau, had little difficulty in making them appear ridiculous. The literary storms which Wernigke raised cleared the air, and in Hamburg, which, being in close touch with England, was readily influenced by English ideas, were born two poets who played an important part in the evolution of modern literature, Barthold Heinrich Brockes and Friedrich von Hagedorn. Brockes (1680-1747)[2] began by translating Marino's epic, *La strage degli innocenti* (*Bethlehemitischer Kinder-Mord*, 1715), then imitated French models. Being, however, a passionate lover of nature, he soon fell under the spell of English nature-poetry, such as Pope's *Pastorals* and *Windsor Forest*, and in this way was the first writer of his century to establish close relations between English and German literature. In 1740 he translated Pope's *Essay on Man*, and in 1745 Thomson's *Seasons*. His original poetry is collected under the fantastic title *Irdisches Vergnügen in Gott* (9 parts), the first part of which appeared in 1721, the last in 1748. With this work, of which religion and nature form the two poles, begins that stream of didactic German verse which reached its culmination about a quarter of a century later in Klopstock's *Messias*.

B. H. Brockes, 1680-1747.

F. von Hagedorn, 1708-54.

The poetry of Friedrich von Hagedorn (1708-54)[3] stands on a much higher plane than that of Brockes. He, too, was strongly influenced by English literature, having spent three years in London as secretary to the Danish embassy before settling down in 1731 in his native town. But Prior and Gay, rather than Pope and Thomson, were his masters, and Lafontaine's *Fables* was his favourite reading. Hagedorn was essentially a social poet; unlike Brockes, he had no sympathy with religious enthusiasts; melancholy had no attraction for him, love no sentiment:—

> "Sollt' auch ich durch Gram und Leid
> Meinen Leib verzehren
> Und des Lebens Fröhlichkeit,
> Weil ich leb', entbehren?
> Freunde, nein! es stehet fest,
> Meiner Jugend Überrest
> Soll mir Lust gewähren.

[1] Cp. L. Fulda, *l.c.*, 2, 505 ff.
[2] Cp. L. Fulda, *l.c.*, 2, 273 ff.
[3] In *Anakreontiker und preussisch-patriotische Lyriker*, ed. F. Muncker (D.N.L., 45 [1894]), 1 ff.

Quellen tausendfacher Lust:
Jugend! Schönheit! Liebe!
Ihr erweckt in meiner Brust
Schmeichelhafte Triebe.
Kein Genuss ergrübelt sich;
Ich weiss g'nug, indem ich mich
Im Empfinden übe."[1]

Hagedorn cannot be called an Anacreontic poet in the narrow sense of the word, for his ideal was rather Horace than Anacreon. Nor is his poetry limited to love-songs and drinking-songs; after the *Oden und Lieder* (of which collections were published in 1742, 1744, and 1752) the most popular of all his works were the *Fabeln und Erzählungen* (1738). The *Moralischen Gedichte*, published twelve years later, form a continuation of this collection, and to these were added, in 1753, *Epigrammatische Gedichte*. With his delicate self-restraint and his feeling for form and rhythm, Hagedorn stands apart from the other poets of his time; indeed, there is something almost un-German in his character as a poet: he might be regarded as a forerunner of Wieland, and one of a long line of writers whose unconscious mission in the economy of German letters it is to counterbalance the national tendency to revel in feelings and emotions. However this may be, he gave the dominant tone to the German lyric from Gottsched's defeat to the love-songs of the *Sesenheimer Liederbuch*, and even Klopstock did not escape his influence.

A. von Haller, 1708-77.

The Swiss writer Albrecht von Haller (1708-77),[2] whose name is usually mentioned with Hagedorn's, is, as a poet, more akin to Brockes; he had all Brockes's religious enthusiasm for nature. Poetry, however, had but a small share in the life of this remarkable man, who, besides writing verses, was the first anatomist and physiologist of his century. His literary reputation rests upon the *Versuch Schweizerischer Gedichte* (1732), the second edition of which (1734) contained his two most famous poems, *Die Alpen*, the literary fruit of a tour made in 1728, and *Über den Ursprung des Übels*. Haller's verse has little of the grace and smoothness of Hagedorn's, but his poetic imagination was cast in a grander mould; he felt more deeply. He describes the Alps, if

[1] D.N.L., 45, 128.
[2] *Gedichte*, ed. L. Hirzel, Frauenfeld, 1882; selections (ed. A. Frey) in D.N.L., 41, 1 [1884].

not with the enthusiasm of the later generation which sat at Rousseau's feet, at least with a sense of the moral effect of beautiful scenery, and with something of that melancholy which runs through English nature-poetry in the eighteenth century. But his verse is not all in a contemplative or didactic vein; he could also at times be satirical, and there is more genuine passion in a poem like *Doris* (1730) than in any poetry of the time except Günther's. In his old age Haller turned to the novel (*Usong*, 1771), which he employed mainly as a channel for his political views.

K. F. Drollinger, 1688-1742.

A poet who may be regarded as a forerunner of Haller is Karl Friedrich Drollinger (born at Durlach in 1688, died in 1742), whose *Gedichte* were not collected until 1743. Drollinger belongs, properly speaking, to the school of Canitz and Besser, but he had more poetic inspiration than they, and, under the influence of Pope and Brockes, his imagination succeeded at times in freeing itself from the shackles which lay so heavily on the majority of his contemporaries.

"Moralische Wochenschriften."

Hardly less important than the new spirit manifest in the poetry of these writers was another result of English influence, namely, the weekly journal on the model of the *Tatler*, *Spectator*, and *Guardian*. In 1713 there had appeared in Hamburg a periodical called *Der Vernünfftler*, which consisted mainly of extracts translated from the English. This was the first German imitation of the English weeklies, and in a very few years these "Moralischen Wochenschriften," as they were called, had won a popularity which surpassed even that of the English weeklies in England; before the close of the eighteenth century more than five hundred of them were published in Germany. In the following chapter we shall see how important these papers were in the literary battles of the next few decades; it is enough to mention here, as the best of them, the *Discourse der Mahlern*, published by Bodmer and Breitinger in 1721, and *Der Patriot*, which appeared in Hamburg from 1724 to 1726. These journals were inferior to their English models as literature, but they had, if anything, a deeper and more far-reaching influence on the nation. They were not merely the literary amusement of the leisured classes as the English weeklies had been; they were at the same time organs for the moral and literary education of the people as a whole.

CHAPTER II.

LEIPZIG AND ZURICH AS LITERARY CENTRES.

If any particular year is to be chosen as the starting-point for modern German literature—and for the literary historian such "boundary dates" have an importance which may be compared with that of hypotheses for the scientist—this year is 1740. In 1740 Frederick the Great became King of Prussia; in 1740 Maria Theresa ascended the Austrian throne, and both were rulers of significance for the political future of the German-speaking peoples. In this same year took place the great controversy between Gottsched and his Leipzig friends on the one side, and the two Swiss literary reformers Bodmer and Breitinger on the other. From this controversy the Swiss party, the representatives of the modern spirit in literature and criticism, came out victorious, and between their victory and the publication of Herder's *Fragmente* in 1767 lies the first epoch in the development of German classical literature.

J. C. Gottsched. 1700-66.

Johann Christoph Gottsched,[1] who was born in the vicinity of Königsberg in 1700, is one of those tragic figures which are to be found in all literatures; he was a man whose ambitions outstripped his abilities. From theology, which was his original study at the university in Königsberg, he turned to literature and æsthetics, ultimately becoming himself a "Privatdocent" or lecturer in the university. His duties had hardly begun when he was obliged to leave Königsberg to escape a danger to which his tall stature exposed him, that of being forcibly enrolled amongst the

[1] Cp. G. Waniek, *Gottsched und die deutsche Litteratur seiner Zeit*, Leipzig, 1897; J. Crüger, *Gottsched, Bodmer und Breitinger* (D.N.L., 42 [1884]).

king's grenadiers. This was in 1724. Gottsched turned his steps to Leipzig, which already had the reputation of being the intellectual metropolis of Germany; its university, its periodical fairs, its large share of the German book trade, combined in the eighteenth century to make this town the most important in Northern Europe. In Leipzig Gottsched soon made a name for himself; he was elected a member of the "Deutschübende Gesellschaft," and, a few years later, became, as the "senior" of this society, a power in the world of letters. Throwing himself without reserve into the rising tide of humanitarian rationalism, he worked zealously for the spread of its ideas. In 1725 he began the publication of a paper on the model of the *Spectator*, entitled *Die vernünftigen Tadlerinnen*. But it was not successful, and in 1727 gave place to *Der Biedermann*, which met with even less favour.

Gottsched's *Critische Dichtkunst*, 1730.

Gottsched's first important work was his *Versuch einer Critischen Dichtkunst vor die Deutschen* (1730), which superseded Opitz's *Buch von der deutschen Poeterey*, and gave the deathblow to what still remained of the second Silesian school. This treatise is based essentially upon Boileau's *Art poétique*, and subjects literature to a similar artificial classification: it sets up canons of good taste and discusses the respective parts which reason and imagination play in poetic composition. But Gottsched had also learned from the English movement to lay emphasis upon moral principles in literature, and, above all, to recognise the claims of nature. Poetry was not, he insisted, a purely mechanical art of writing verse, as the older "Poetics" had taught; it was an "imitation of nature." He made the mistake, however, of trying to reconcile this idea with what he had learnt from Boileau; he invented fresh rules, and these rules naturally led back to the mechanical methods of writing verse which he was endeavouring to avoid. The watchword "nature" was not in itself sufficient to effect a reform in literature; and in essentials Gottsched's work was no advance upon its French model.

His dramatic reforms.

The branch of literature which derived most benefit from his reforms was the drama. He found drama and theatre divorced, and united them again. In conjunction with the troupe of actors at whose head stood Johann

Neuber and his more talented wife, Karoline (1697-1760),[1] Gottsched established the masterpieces of the French classical drama on the German stage; he abolished bombast and buffoonery, and forbade the actors to take liberties with the texts they had to speak. The theatre was thus at once made attractive to the educated classes. It is true, as Lessing said, that Gottsched had no understanding for what was good in the popular drama; his attempt to create a German drama on French lines was little in conformity with the national spirit. But it is doubtful if a reform of any other kind would at this period have been effective. It was time enough in the next generation for the German drama, with the help of English models, to find a natural course of development; in Gottsched's time it was chiefly important that the theatre, which had hitherto had little to do with literature, should be brought into touch with it, and the direct means of attaining this end was to imitate the most polished nation in Europe. Gottsched, however, was at one with the English in many things: he claimed with them that the drama must be "recht wahrscheinlich," and the costumes historically correct; even his adherence to the unities was in keeping with his realism.

Karoline Neuber, 1697-1760.

The reformed theatre could not subsist without plays, and Gottsched and his friends set to work to provide it with a repertory which consisted, for the most part, of translations. Thus arose the *Deutsche Schaubühne nach den Regeln der alten Griechen und Römer eingerichtet* (6 vols., 1740-45). One of the most capable contributors to this collection of plays was Gottsched's wife, Luise Adelgunde (*née* Kulmus, 1713-62), to whom the translation of the comedies was mainly intrusted; her two or three original pieces[2] show a dramatic talent to which her husband's famous tragedy *Der sterbende Cato*, produced in 1731, cannot pretend. *Der sterbende Cato* is essentially a translation of J. Deschamps' *Caton d'Utique* (1715), but the end is adapted from Addison's play on the same subject, which was more to Gottsched's liking. Only about one-tenth of the whole is original. The sententiousness of the play and one or two effective scenes

The *Deutsche Schaubühne*, 1740-45.

Der sterbende Cato, 1731.

[1] Cp. F. J. von Reden-Esbeck, *Karoline Neuber und ihre Zeitgenossen*, Leipzig, 1881.

[2] *Das Testament*, in J. Crüger, *l.c.*, 249 ff. Cp. P. Schlenther, *Frau Gottsched und die bürgerliche Komödie*, Berlin, 1886.

caught the taste of the time, and for the next twenty years *Der sterbende Cato* was the most popular tragedy on the German stage.

The success of his theatrical reforms, the prosperity of the "German Society" under his presidentship, and the establishment of a new literary journal, the *Beyträge zur critischen Historie der deutschen Sprache, Poesie und Beredtsamkeit* (1732-44), had gradually brought Gottsched's authority to a culmination. This was about 1738, when the first mutterings of the coming storm were beginning to make themselves heard. The leaders of the Swiss revolt against Gottsched, with which a new movement in German literature was inaugurated, were two professors of Zurich, Jakob Bodmer (1698-1783) and Johann Jakob Breitinger (1701-76). They were scholars rather than men of letters, but they had both more understanding for poetry than Gottsched. Their joint activity began in 1721, when they edited the *Discourse der Mahlern*,[1] which, as we have seen, was one of the first German weeklies in imitation of the *Spectator*. In this journal the tendency to favour English in preference to French literature is unmistakable. Bodmer, who, as far as literature is concerned, was the more important writer, published in 1732 a prose translation of *Paradise Lost*, which awakened the suspicions of Gottsched. It was not, however, until six years later that serious differences began to arise between Leipzig and Zurich, and with the appearance of Breitinger's *Critische Dichtkunst* (1739) and Bodmer's *Critische Abhandlung von dem Wunderbaren in der Poesie* (1740), the storm finally broke.

J. Bodmer, 1698-1783.

J. J. Breitinger, 1701-76.

Bodmer began the preface which he wrote to Breitinger's *Critische Dichtkunst* with the words, "Ein gewisser Kunstrichter hat angemercket, dass die Natur vor der Kunst gewesen, dass die besten Schriften nicht von den Regeln entstanden seyn, sondern hingegen die Regeln von den Schriften hergeholet worden."[2] Here was one of the vital differences between Gottsched and the Swiss party: Gottsched's object

[1] Ed. T. Vetter, 1, Frauenfeld, 1891; a selection by J. Crüger, *l.c.*, 1 ff. On Bodmer, cp. also the *Denkschrift zu seinem* 200. *Geburtstag*, Zurich, 1900.

[2] The "Kunstrichter" is the Abbé Du Bos (1670-1742), against whom Bodmer's preface is in part directed, but he and Breitinger were substantially in agreement with the statement quoted. Cp. F. Braitmaier, *Geschichte der poetischen Theorie und Kritik von den Diskursen der Maler bis auf Lessing*, Leipzig, 1888, 1, 156 f., and F. Servaes, *Die Poetik Gottscheds und der Schweizer* (*Quellen und Forschungen*, 60), Strassburg, 1887.

was to reform literature from without by imposing upon it rules invented by Aristotle and the French theorists; his opponents, on the other hand, endeavoured to reform it from within, by studying the nature of poetic creation, by investigating how poetry arose in the soul of the poet, and by analysing the impression it left upon the reader. The advance made by Bodmer and Breitinger was that they laid chief stress upon the imagination; their poetic creed afforded more room for feeling, for enthusiasm, for genius. Gottsched, for his part, clung doggedly to the principle that poetry must be a product of reason acting in conscious recognition of certain laws. Neither the *Critische Dichtkunst* nor the *Abhandlung von dem Wunderbaren* was written in a spirit of direct polemic against Gottsched, but the latter's vanity was hurt to find that principles should be defended which were in antagonism to his own, and he responded to the challenge with considerable bitterness. In Bodmer's next pamphlet, *Betrachtungen über die poetischen Gemälde der Dichter* (1741), the Swiss critic showed that he, too, could be bitter. The controversy was then taken up by the henchmen on both sides; satire, invective, every weapon of literary warfare was called into requisition, and the battle raged fiercely in the periodical literature of the time.

Gottsched's defeat.

Gottsched's defeat was inevitable: one might say it was due as much to the rapidly advancing spirit of the age as to the attacks of his adversaries. In the course of the next few years all his friends fell away from him; Neuber's troupe ridiculed him on the stage in 1741 as "der Tadler," and in 1748 the first three cantos of Klopstock's *Messias*—the best exemplification of the Swiss theories of poetry—appeared in the *Bremer Beyträge*, the organ of a group of writers who had once been Gottsched's faithful followers. There is not a more piteous incident in the history of literary criticism than that of Gottsched's setting up in 1751 the tedious epic *Hermann oder das befreyte Deutschland*, by his disciple C. O. von Schönaich (1725-1807), as the crowning achievement of German literature. Although for the last twenty years of his life—he lived until the end of 1766, the year after Goethe came to study in Leipzig—Gottsched saw his reputation dwindling away, he was not idle. In 1748 he published a *Grundlegung einer deutschen Sprachkunst*, which did more solid service for German prose and the spread of

a correct High German than his *Critische Dichtkunst* had done for German poetry; he studied, collected, and translated monuments of old German literature, and, under the title *Nöthiger Vorrath zur Geschichte der deutschen dramatischen Dichtkunst* (1757-65), he published a collection of old German dramas, which is still a valuable mine for the literary historian.

The attacks of his Swiss adversaries had not disconcerted Gottsched as much as might have been expected, but it went to his heart when a number of friends in Leipzig, writers who had learned their art at his feet, began to fall away. These younger men grew dissatisfied with the official organ of the party, the *Belustigungen des Verstandes und Witzes*, which had appeared since 1741 under the editorship of J. J. Schwabe (1714-84), and they resolved to found a new journal upon more liberal lines: thus arose the *Neue Beyträge zum Vergnügen des Verstandes und Witzes*, usually called, from the fact that it was published in Bremen, the *Bremer Beyträge* (1744-48). The actual founders of the *Beyträge*,[1] K. C. Gärtner (1712-91), J. A. Cramer (1723-88), and J. Adolf Schlegel (1721-93), father of the two brothers Schlegel who were to play so important a part in the literature of the next generation, were men of small poetic talent. But Adolf Schlegel's brother, Johann Elias Schlegel (1719-49), was a writer of some genius, and the ablest dramatist that the Leipzig school produced. His tragedies, *Herrmann* (1743) and *Canut* (1747), his comedies, *Die stumme Schönheit* (1747) and *Der Triumph der guten Frauen* (1748), are among the best that were to be seen on the German stage before Lessing. Instead of imitating the French tragedy, like Gottsched, Elias Schlegel went to the Greeks for his models; and in his theoretical writings,[2] of which the chief is *Gedanken zur Aufnahme des dänischen Theaters* (1747), he paved the way for Lessing. He also wrote with appreciation of Shakespeare, whose *Julius Cæsar* had shortly before (1741) been translated into German by K. W. von Borck, the Prussian Ambassador in London. In Denmark, whither he had gone in 1743 as

The *Bremer Beyträge*, 1744-48.

J. E. Schlegel, 1719-49.

[1] *Bremer Beiträger*, edited by F. Muncker, 2 vols. (D.N.L., 43, 44 [1899]); selections from Cramer and J. E. Schlegel, 2, 63 ff. and 101 ff.

[2] *J. E. Schlegels ästhetische und dramaturgische Schriften*, ed. J. von Antoniewicz (*Deutsche Litteraturdenkmale des* 18. *und* 19. *Jahrh.*, 26), Heilbronn, 1887.

secretary to the Saxon embassy, Schlegel came into personal touch with the Molière of the North, Ludwig Holberg. About this time, it may be noted, Holberg's comedies were even more popular on the German stage than Molière's, and his influence is conspicuous on an excellent comedy of Hamburg life, *Der Bookesbeutel* (1742), by Hinrich Borkenstein,[1] which, in its rough humour and satire, throws the drama of the Saxon school completely into the shade. Hamburg still remained the gate by which English literature found its way into Germany: J. A. Ebert, a Hamburg contributor to the *Bremer Beyträge* (1723-95), translated, in 1751, Young's *Night Thoughts*, a poem which had a widespread influence on the literature of the following decades. J. F. W. Zachariä (1726-77), another poet of this group, is best remembered by his comic epic *Der Renommiste* (1744),[2] an imitation of Boileau's *Lutrin* and Pope's *Rape of the Lock*. The "Renommist" is a swaggering student who comes from the outer darkness of Jena to Leipzig, the metropolis of fashion and good taste; his experiences and adventures give a good idea of life in Leipzig before the middle of the eighteenth century.

Der Bookesbeutel, 1742.

J. F. W. Zachariä, 1726-77.

One of the most gifted of the "Bremer Beiträger" was Gottlieb Wilhelm Rabener, born at Wachau near Leipzig in 1714, and educated at the school of St Afra in Meissen. Almost all the best intellect of Saxony at this time passed through one or other of the three great "Fürstenschulen" founded at the Reformation from the wealth of demolished monasteries in Meissen, Pforta, and Grimma. Adolf and Elias Schlegel, and, a little later, Klopstock, were educated at Pforta; Cramer came from Grimma, and Gärtner, Rabener, Gellert, and Lessing from Meissen. Rabener did not make a profession of literature, but only devoted his leisure to it: he was an inspector of revenues in Dresden, where he died in 1771. His satires are probably the least bitter that were ever written; satire in his eyes was little more than good-natured irony. In the preface (*Vorbericht vom Misbrauche der Satire*) to his *Sammlung satirischer Schriften* (1751-55),[3] Rabener states his principles:—

G. W. Rabener 1714-71.

[1] Reprinted in the *Litteraturdenkmale*, 56, 57, Leipzig, 1896.
[2] Cp. F. Muncker, *l.c.*, 2, 243 ff.
[3] A selection ed. A. Holder in Hendel's *Bibliothek der Gesamtlitteratur des In- und Auslandes*, No. 217-219. Cp. Muncker, *l.c.*, 2, 1 ff.

"Wer den Namen eines Satirenschreibers verdienen will, dessen Herz muss redlich seyn. Er muss die Tugend, die er andre lehrt, für den einzigen Grund des wahren Glücks halten. Das ehrwürdige der Religion muss seine ganze Seele erfüllen. Nach der Religion muss ihm der Thron des Fürsten, und das Ansehen der Obern das Heiligste seyn. . . . Er muss die Welt und das gantze Hertz der Menschen, aber vor allen Dingen muss er sich selbst kennen. Er muss liebreich seyn, wenn er bitter ist" (p. 9 ff.)

The satire inspired by such a spirit can obviously not rise far above the commonplace interests of provincial life; at the same time, Rabener was probably shrewd enough to recognise that it would not have been politic to touch on public affairs in the Saxony of Graf Brühl. His work is characterised by a kindly ironical humour which makes it more readable to-day than any other production of the Saxon school, Gellert's *Fables* excepted. He did not attempt to express himself in verse, but his prose is excellent and compares favourably with that of a considerably later age.

Although Rabener was too good-natured to give much cause for offence, there were two of his contemporaries who were less scrupulous. C. L. Liscow (1701-60), who published in 1739 a *Sammlung satyrischer und ernsthafter Schriften*,[1] has bitterness enough at his command, but his satire often loses its point by being diffuse; moreover, his attacks are for the most part directed against obscure *literati*, and soon ceased to have an actual interest. A. G. Kästner (1719-1800),[2] Professor of Mathematics in Göttingen, yielded to the temptation, which Gottsched's school encouraged, of writing poetry on mathematical principles, but he stands out as the most brilliant epigrammatist—not excepting Lessing—of his time; his witty and stinging verses are forerunners of the *Xenien*. Kästner's *Vermischte Schriften* appeared in two volumes in 1755 and 1772.

C. L. Liscow, 1701-60.

A. G. Kästner, 1719-1800.

C. F. Gellert, 1715-69.

The most popular writer of the Leipzig circle, and perhaps the most universally popular in the history of German letters, was Christian Fürchtegott Gellert. Gellert was born near Freiberg in Saxony in 1715, and died in Leipzig in 1769. His success as a student in Leipzig was sufficient to justify a university career; in 1745 he became "Privatdocent," and

[1] Cp. F. Muncker, *l.c.*, 2, 49 ff.; selections by A. Holder, Halle, 1901.

[2] J. Minor, *Fabeldichter, Satiriker und Popularphilosophen des* 18. *Jahrhunderts* (D.N.L., 73 [1884]), 83 ff.

in 1751 Professor of Philosophy in the University of Leipzig. The enthusiasm of his students knew no bounds, his lectures being sometimes attended by an audience of four hundred; and outside the university his popularity was even greater. Gellert was essentially a man of the people and beloved by the people; he had no higher ambition than that all classes should be able to appreciate his writings.

"Mein grösster Ehrgeiz," he wrote in one of his letters, "besteht darinn, dass ich den Vernünftigen dienen und gefallen will, und nicht den Gelehrten im engen Verstande. Ein kluges Frauenzimmer gilt mir mehr, als eine gelehrte Zeitung und der niedrigste Mann von gesundem Verstande ist mir würdig genug, seine Aufmerksamkeit zu suchen, sein Vergnügen zu befördern, und ihm in einem leicht zu behaltenden Ausdrucke gute Wahrheiten zu sagen, und edle Empfindungen in seiner Seele rege zu machen."[1]

This was the secret of his popularity; it also explains his poetry. In Gellert's eyes, literature had only a right to exist in so far as it furthered moral ends, and he wrote accordingly. His comedies, of which *Das Loos in der Lotterie* (1747) is the best, and his pastorals are in the style of Gottsched's school; the character-drawing occasionally shows some skill, but the dialogue is unnatural and the plots are completely without dramatic significance. More important is Gellert's only novel, *Leben der Schwedischen Gräfinn von G**** (1747-48), which may be regarded as the first social novel in German literature. It is a remarkable blending of the type of novel cultivated by Lohenstein—that is to say, the final stage in the decay of medieval romance—with the character novel of modern literature. Gellert's professed model was *Pamela*, but he preferred the adventures and coincidences, the heartrending experiences and immoralities of the older fiction to Richardson's simplicity. From the English novelist, for whom he had unlimited admiration, Gellert at least learned to make commonplace men and women interesting, and it is needless to say that the moralising tone of Richardson appealed strongly to him; the sententious preaching of the *Schwedische Gräfinn* forms a ludicrous contrast to the improprieties of the narrative. As a letter-writer, Gellert exerted a more lasting influence than as a novelist. In 1751 he published a collection of letters (*Briefe, nebst einer*

Die Schwedische Gräfinn, 1747-48.

[1] Quoted by J. A. Cramer, *Gellerts Leben*, Leipzig, 1774, 57.

praktischen Abhandlung von dem guten Geschmacke in Briefen) which remained recognised models of epistolary style for more than twenty years.

Fabeln und Erzählungen, 1746, 1748.

His reputation now rests mainly upon his popular *Fabeln und Erzählungen* (1746, 1748),[1] in which the verses, although wanting in the higher qualities of poetic writing, charm by their simplicity. The naïve manner in which Gellert tells his stories, cloaks the mediocrity of his poetic talent; indeed, he succeeds by his very artlessness where a greater poet might have failed. The sources of his fables are extremely varied, Hagedorn and Lafontaine being obviously the models. But Gellert must at least be given credit for originality; even in well-worn anecdotes he has an eye for didactic possibilities which escaped his predecessors, and his point of view is invariably his own. Hardly less popular in their day than the *Fabeln und Erzählungen* were the *Geistlichen Oden und Lieder* (1757), but the absence of real poetic inspiration naturally makes itself more felt in verses of this nature. The *Fables* remain Gellert's chief work, and, together with Rabener's satires, they may be said to have been the most genuinely "home-grown" products of the Saxon school. The eighteenth century was the golden age of the fable in European literature, and Gellert at once became the model for his contemporaries and successors. His chief follower was M. G. Lichtwer (1719-83), whose *Æsopische Fabeln* appeared in 1748, and are hardly inferior to those of his master. Independently of Gellert, a Swiss writer, J. L. Meyer von Knonau (1705-85), published in 1744 a collection of *Neue Fabeln*, which show a close observation of nature; while in the *Fabeln* (1783) of the Alsatian G. K. Pfeffel (1736-1809), this literary *genre* begins to show traces of decay.[2]

The contributors to the *Bremer Beiträge* were not reformers; they only put into practice the better elements in Gottsched's reforms, avoiding his extremes. They sought their models, with preference, in French literature, and success meant to them a close imitation of those models, or, as in the case of Rabener and Gellert, it was won in byways which

[1] F. Muncker, *l.c.*, 1; also ed. by K. Biedermann in the *Bibl. d. deutschen Nationallitt. des* 18. *und* 19. *Jahrhunderts*, 30, Leipzig, 1871.

[2] Cp. J. Minor, *Fabeldichter* (D.N.L., 73 [1884]); K. Goedeke, *Grundrisz zur Geschichte der deutschen Dichtung*, 2nd ed., 4, 44 ff.

were of little consequence for the future development of German literature. Their poetry was, in general, inspired by reason rather than imagination; they knew nothing of that fervid enthusiasm for nature which breathes from Haller's Swiss poems. Under these circumstances it is not difficult to see that the publication of an epic such as the *Messias*, the first three cantos of which appeared in the *Bremer Beyträge* in the spring of 1748, must necessarily have been disastrous to the journal. With Klopstock's appearance German literature took a sudden leap forward, and the "Bremer Beiträger" seemed overnight to have been left behind.

CHAPTER III.

THE PRUSSIAN POETS; KLOPSTOCK.

During the first half of the eighteenth century, the University of Halle was the centre from which emanated almost every new movement in German thought. At its foundation in 1694, it was the fountain-head of German Pietism; in 1707, Christian von Wolff made it the focus of German rationalism, and again, between 1735 and 1740, A. G. Baumgarten (1714-62), Wolff's disciple, taught in Halle, and, under the stimulus of Breitinger's poetic theories, laid the foundation of a new philosophic science, æsthetics. His work on this subject, *Æsthetica*, did not, it is true, begin to appear until 1750, when Baumgarten had exchanged his chair in Halle for one in Frankfort-on-the-Oder; but in his lectures at Halle he naturally favoured the Swiss party rather than Gottsched. It is thus not surprising that the younger literary talents of the university should also have been partisans of Bodmer and Breitinger.

I. J. Pyra, 1715-44, and S. G. Lange, 1711-81.

I. J. Pyra (1715-44) and S. G. Lange (1711-81), who were both students in Halle in 1737, came forward with *Freundschaftliche Lieder*,[1] which they wrote together, as champions of a rhymeless poetry in antique metres, and were thus direct forerunners of Klopstock. A year or two later, it was again three students of Halle, Gleim, Uz, and Götz, who laid the foundations of the Anacreontic or Prussian school of poetry. Anacreontic poetry is a specifically eighteenth-century type of literature, and appeals as little as the fable to modern tastes. Hagedorn had been the first to naturalise it in Germany, and in the hands of the Prussian school it became for a time the most characteristic form of the lyric. As

[1] Ed. A. Sauer (*Litteraturdenkmale*, 22), Heilbronn, 1885.

long as the German lyric was restricted to imitations of Anacreon, there was naturally little room for the poetry of feeling which Günther had awakened to new life; moreover, the main source of poetic inspiration in this age was neither sentiment nor nature, but the majestic figure of Frederick the Great.

J. W. L. Gleim,[1] born in 1719, was a native of Thuringia. After a few years, first as a student in Halle and then in Berlin, he settled in Halberstadt as secretary to the cathedral chapter, later on becoming canon, and here he remained until the close of his long life in 1803. As a poet, Gleim did not rise above mediocrity, but he stood on an intimate footing with the entire literary world, from Ewald von Kleist to Heinrich von Kleist, and thus his reputation was assured, irrespective of his talents. "Vater Gleim" was always ready with assistance for all who turned to him, and no one weighed too carefully his uninspired verses. His first publication, *Versuch in scherzhaften Liedern* (1744), was the beginning of endless Anacreontic imitations, and the famous *Preussischen Kriegslieder von einem Grenadier* (1758) made his reputation once and for all. The best thing about these war-songs, which nowadays give an impression of monotony, was their patriotic enthusiasm; and this enthusiasm commended them to a public which had no thoughts for their merits as poetry. Gleim was virtually the poet of the *Preussischen Kriegslieder* and nothing else; his *Fabeln* (1756) could not compare with Gellert's, and his oriental epic, *Halladat, oder das rothe Buch* (1774), was hardly more successful than were his imitations of the Minnesingers. J. W. L. Gleim, 1719-1803.

A sincerer and more gifted poet than Gleim was Johann Peter Uz (1720-96),[2] born in Ansbach, the second of the group of Anacreontic poets. In Uz's *Lyrische Gedichte* (1749) the German Anacreontic is to be seen at its best. Like Hagedorn, Uz had studied the lyric of other lands industriously; he had learned not only from Horace, but from the French poets. There is thus a Latin polish on his verses, which balances the inevitable triviality of his J. P. Uz, 1720-96.

[1] *Anakreontiker und preussisch-patriotische Lyriker*, ed. F. Muncker, 1 (D.N.L., 45, 1 [1894]), 177 ff.; the *Preussischen Kriegslieder* are edited by A. Sauer in the *Litteraturdenkm.*, 4, Heilbronn, 1882.

[2] *Sämtliche Poetische Werke*, ed. A. Sauer (*Litteraturdenkm.*, 33-38), Stuttgart, 1890. Cp. F. Muncker, *l.c.*, 2, 3 ff.

themes. In his philosophic poems, of which *Theodicée* (1755) is, on the whole, the most characteristic, Uz might be claimed as a direct predecessor of Schiller. *Der Sieg des Liebesgottes* (1755), on the other hand, is a comic epic in which the poet follows, not unsuccessfully, in Zachariä's footsteps. J. N. Götz (1721-81), a native of Worms, was the least gifted of the circle and essentially a writer of "occasional" verses. His familiarity with Latin and French literature was no less extensive than that of his friend Uz, but he wrote easily and brought the frivolous and insincere side of the Anacreontic into prominence.

J. N. Götz, 1721-81.

It seems almost incongruous to include the unhappy Prussian officer, Ewald Christian von Kleist (1715-59),[1] in the group of Anacreontic singers; Kleist's heartfelt poetry is no less strange in such surroundings than was the poet himself in the military society of Potsdam. It was, however, through Gleim's influence and friendship that Kleist became a poet, Gleim being thus the link between the literary movement, which originated in Halle, and the poets of the Prussian capital. Ewald von Kleist is the most modern poet of the Frederician age; he is filled with a passionate love for nature, and a melancholy lies upon his poetry which was alien to the spirit of the "Aufklärung." *Der Frühling*, the fragment of a descriptive poem suggested by Thomson's *Seasons*—which Brockes had translated four years earlier—appeared in 1749, and laid the foundation of Kleist's fame. The charm of his poetry lies in the warmth with which nature's beauties are described; spring appears to the poet as a new revelation.

E. C. von Kleist, 1715-59.

Der Frühling, 1749.

"Empfang mich, schattichter Hain, voll hoher grüner Gewölbe!
Empfang mich! Fülle mit Ruh' und holder Wehmuth die Seele!
Führ mich in Gängen voll Nacht zum glänzenden Throne der Tugend,
Der um sich die Schatten erhellt! Lehr mich den Widerhall reizen
Zum Ruhm verjüngter Natur! Und Ihr, Ihr lachenden Wiesen,
Ihr holde Thäler voll Rosen, von lauten Bächen durchirret,
Mit Euren Düften will ich in mich Zufriedenheit ziehen
Und, wenn Aurora Euch weckt, mit ihren Strahlen sie trinken."[2]

These are the opening lines of a poem which may be regarded as filling the gap between the older nature-poetry of

[1] *Werke*, ed. A. Sauer, 3 vols., Berlin [1881-82]. Cp. F. Muncker, *l.c.*, 2, 103 ff.

[2] From the edition of 1756 (A. Sauer, 1, 206 f.)

Brockes and Haller, and the fervid poetry of Klopstock and the writers who came after him. The happiest years of Kleist's life were 1757 and 1758, when he came into touch with the literary circles of Leipzig, and, above all, was Lessing's intimate friend. To these years belong the fine *Ode an die Preussische Armee* (1757), and the short epic, *Cissides und Paches* (1759), the most polished of all Kleist's poems. "Der edle Tod fürs Vaterland," which he himself had wished at the close of this poem, was not long in coming; on August 12, 1759, he was severely wounded in the battle of Kunersdorf. He fell into the hands of the enemy, and assistance came too late to save him; his death took place on the 24th of August.

K. W. Ramler, 1725-98.

Although also, strictly speaking, no Anacreontic poet, Karl Wilhelm Ramler (1725-98)[1] was more akin than Kleist to the school of Gleim and Uz. Ramler's verses are the complete embodiment of the rationalistic classicism of Frederick the Great and Voltaire. Had Frederick appointed a German Court poet, his choice would undoubtedly have fallen upon this "German Horace," who, for more than thirty years, was the acknowledged leader of poetic taste in Berlin. Ramler's verses (*Lyrische Gedichte*, 1772), with their pedantic metrical correctness, were purely intellectual exercises; the imagination had nothing to do with them. The pomp of the Roman ode and the graceful insincerities of Horatian love-poetry are here clothed in German garb, but they leave the reader cold; indeed, Ramler is a poet only by virtue of what he borrows from his masters.

A. L. Karschin, 1722-91.

The last writer of the Prussian group to be mentioned is Anna Luisa Karsch, or, according to the custom of the time, Karschin (1722-91),[2] one of the few German women of the eighteenth century who made a serious profession of literature. Frau Karsch became known about 1760, when she attracted attention by verses in the patriotic style then fashionable. A collection of her *Auserlesene Gedichte* appeared in 1763. She possessed considerable fluency of expression, but little originality; her verse is mainly a mechanical reiteration of the classical style and metres of her male contemporaries. In a less artificial age, and amidst favourable surroundings, it

[1] Cp. F. Muncker, *l.c.*, 2, 199 ff.
[2] *Ibid.*, 2, 285 ff.

is possible that this "German Sappho," as she called herself, might have found a form of expression more congenial to her talents than the Horatian ode; Gleim and Ramler were kindly patrons, but there was little likelihood of a writer of genius learning anything in their school.

These, then, were the chief poets of the Frederician age: no great poets certainly, but poets who reflected more or less faithfully the Prussian spirit at the zenith of eighteenth-century rationalism. Frederick the Great took little interest in German literature—his *De la littérature allemande* (1780)[1] shows a complete misunderstanding of the literary movement of his time—but, as a ruler, he unconsciously created the conditions for a truer national literature than the Prussian poets dreamed of. In the Frederick of the Seven Years' War the German people discovered a national hero; the cannon of Rossbach awakened the nation to a pride and self-confidence which swept away the servitude to French models, and furthered the interests of literature to a greater extent than Gottsched's battle with the Swiss. Thus the debt of German literature to Frederick the Great was by no means confined to the war-songs of Gleim and the classic homage of Ramler. "Der erste wahre und höhere eigentliche Lebensgehalt," wrote Goethe in *Dichtung und Wahrheit*, "kam durch Friedrich den Grossen und die Thaten des siebenjährigen Krieges in die deutsche Poesie."[2]

Frederick the Great, 1712-86.

The genius of Klopstock was to the criticism of his time what the acorn, to which Goethe in *Wilhelm Meister* compared Hamlet, was to the costly jar. Since the early years of the century, the Germans, as we have seen, had been more busily engaged in theorising about what their literature ought to be than in producing literature. The importance of Klopstock's *Messias* is that it was the first actual creation in modern German literature; and when Cantos I.-III. of this epic appeared in the spring of 1748, they shattered the fabric of Gottsched's poetics, and reduced even the theories of the Swiss, who had helped to put the young poet on the right path, to a mere beating of the air. Klopstock was the first German poet of the eighteenth century who was in the best sense "born, not made," and,

F. G. Klopstock, 1724-1803.

[1] Reprinted in the *Litteraturdenkm.*, 16, Heilbronn, 1883.
[2] *Werke* (Weimar edition), 27, 104.

with his advent, the age of theorising came abruptly to an end.

Klopstock's life.

Friedrich Gottlieb Klopstock's native place was the old-world town of Quedlinburg, where he was born on the 2nd of July 1724.[1] It is characteristic of Klopstock's poetic genius that the *Messias* was conceived and in great part planned while he was still a schoolboy; at Schulpforta, where he had been sent to school in 1739, the study of Homer, the Bible, and, above all, of Milton's *Paradise Lost*, in Bodmer's translation (1732), inspired him with the ambition to give his own people a great Christian epic. In 1745 Klopstock went to Jena to study theology, and here the first three cantos of the *Messias* were completed in prose; in the following year, in Leipzig, the prose was converted into hexameters, and in 1748 the three cantos were published in the *Bremer Beyträge*. The first volume of the *Messias*, containing Cantos I.-V., appeared in 1751; the second, in 1756, with five more cantos. The third volume (Cantos XI.-XV.) was not published until 1769; the fourth and last (Cantos XVI.-XX.) in 1773, the year of the publication of *Götz von Berlichingen*.

In May 1748 Klopstock obtained a tutorship in Langensalza, where an unhappy passion for his cousin, Marie Sophie Schmidt, the "Fanny" of his *Odes*, threw a shadow over his life. His reputation, however, was rapidly spreading, and in the summer of 1750 he accepted a pressing and generous invitation from Bodmer, the first and most enthusiastic admirer of his epic, to visit him in Zurich. The visit was a disappointment on both sides, a disappointment for which Klopstock was mainly to blame. Bodmer did not approve of the readiness with which the young poet gave himself up to worldly enjoyments in Zurich; his tastes were little in harmony with Bodmer's ideal of a "Messiasdichter," and a coolness sprang up between the two men which resulted in all but a complete breach. After Klopstock had spent nearly seven months in Switzerland, a prospect, held out to him since his epic had made him famous, was realised: the King of Denmark, Frederick V., invited him to make Copenhagen his home and to complete the *Messias* there. On his journey

Klopstock and Bodmer.

Invitation to Copenhagen.

[1] F. Muncker, *F. G. Klopstock*, Stuttgart, 1888; *Werke*, ed. R. Hamel, 4 vols. in D.N.L., 46-48 [1884].

northward he spent some time in Hamburg, where he made the acquaintance of Meta or Margareta Möller, the "Cidli" of the *Odes*, who, in 1754, became his wife. His happiness, however, was of short duration; four years later Meta died, and Klopstock's life again became unsettled. Copenhagen virtually remained his home until 1770, when political changes loosened his ties to Denmark; he then retired to Hamburg, without, however, losing his Danish pension. He died in 1803, and was buried in Ottensen, near Hamburg, with great pomp and circumstance.

Der Messias, 1748-73.

The *Messias* is a poem of nearly twenty thousand verses, distributed over twenty cantos. Its theme, as set forth in the opening verses, is Christ's redemption of mankind:—

"Sing, unsterbliche Seele, der sündigen Menschen Erlösung,
Die der Messias auf Erden in seiner Menschheit vollendet,
Und durch die er Adams Geschlechte die Liebe der Gottheit
Mit dem Blute des heiligen Bundes von neuem geschenkt hat.
Also geschah des Ewigen Wille. Vergebens erhub sich
Satan wider den göttlichen Sohn; umsonst stand Judäa
Wider ihn auf; er that's, und vollbrachte die grosse Versöhnung."[1]

Klopstock takes up the narrative of the New Testament at the point where Christ ascends the Mount of Olives—this he regards as the beginning of Christ's sufferings for the redemption of the race—and closes with Christ taking His seat on the right hand of God. But the Gospel narrative between these two limits gives but a small idea of the contents of the *Messias*. Klopstock, like his model, Milton, does not restrict himself to the events that pass upon earth; they, indeed, only form a small part of the poem. Hosts of angels and devils are marshalled before us, even the Trinity itself appears. The poet penetrates, as it were, below the surface of the New Testament, and attempts, after the manner of the classic epic, to give every action and event a spiritual significance. And yet, of all the religious poems of the world, the *Messias* is unquestionably the most monotonous and difficult to read. The fault lay not so much in the subject—although the section of Christ's life to which Klopstock restricted himself was too meagre for so long an epic — but in the poet himself. Klopstock's genius was lyric rather than epic; he misunderstood, or perhaps never tried to understand,

[1] Text of 1748 (R. Hamel's edition, 1, 5).

the conditions of the religious epic. He did not see that the method of Homer and Milton, the method which, with unconscious art, the medieval poets followed, was the only possible one; the superhuman figures of a religious faith have to be humanised, the spiritual to be materialised, to bring them within human comprehension and sympathies. Klopstock recoiled with the sensitiveness of that Pietism which forms the background of his poem from such anthropomorphism; he sought to avoid it by drawing his superhuman figures in vague indefinite outlines. But without humanly interesting characters, dramatic action or movement is naturally impossible. It is this "divine inaction" of its personages that makes it so difficult to follow the thread of the *Messias*. Klopstock describes "feelings" for us, not actions; he swims in a sea of lyric sentiment, and forgets even the first duty of an epic poet, to describe something that happens. The line—

"Also fliesse mein Lied voll Empfindung und seliger Einfalt"[1]—

might serve as a motto for the whole poem.

To the modern reader, the most attractive side of the *Messias* is the grandiose flights of imagination which create for the earlier cantos so spacious an atmosphere. The awe-inspiring aspects of nature — the roll of the thunder, the majesty of the mountains, the eternities and infinities —here play a great part, and reveal an imaginative power possessed by no other poet of the first half of the eighteenth century. But the heaven-scaling enthusiasm of the earlier cantos soon died out, and the more careful style of the latter part of the poem seems nowadays but a poor substitute for it. In the first three cantos is to be found the most subtle essence of Klopstock's poetry. The fourth contains some fine poetry, notably the description of the Last Supper, but is tediously long. Perhaps the ripest cantos of all are the three which follow, although the first poetic glow is missing. From Canto VIII. onwards the inequalities are more noticeable, and few readers have now patience to read the second half of the poem at all.

Long before the *Messias* was concluded, it was left behind in the rapidly advancing movement of German literature. A new generation had arisen—the "Stürmer und Dränger"—who

[1] Canto 4, l. 1071 (*l.c.*, 1, 215).

cared little for the passive sentimentality of Klopstock, and demanded instead the fierce action and plastic figures of the theatre; Shakespeare, not Milton, was the master to whom they looked up. Thus the wild enthusiasm that greeted Klopstock's epic at the middle of the century had, in less than twenty years, completely cooled. The public that remained faithful to the old poet consisted, for the most part, of sentimental readers who feared lest he should be too hard-hearted to pardon his contrite devil, Abbadona, at the Last Judgment. To realise the epoch-making nature of the *Messias*, it must be remembered that it was, for its time, the first German epic; in 1748 Germany knew nothing of her older epic literature — the *Heliand* and the *Nibelungenlied*, *Parzival* and *Tristan*. We must look into the tedious poetry that preceded the *Messias*, into C. H. Postel's *Grosser Wittekind* (1724) and the Alexandrine epics already referred to, by Besser, König, Pietsch, and Triller, to understand how great an innovator Klopstock really was. But the *Messias* came too late, or rather German literature advanced too rapidly to allow of it creating a school; the imitations of the epic were of little value. Bodmer was the most industrious of Klopstock's followers, and his *Noah* (1750-52) the first of a long series of epics of this class, each of which was inferior to its predecessor. Both Lavater and Wieland, to mention two other writers, whom we shall meet with later on, wrote Biblical epics in their youth.

Although the *Messias* has now virtually passed into the limbo of unread books, Klopstock's lyric poetry still retains its hold upon our interest. Klopstock wrote lyrics all his life long, and for the most part in the rhymeless and antique measures which Pyra and Lange, it will be remembered, introduced into modern German poetry. Klopstock first collected and published his lyrics under the generic title of *Oden* in 1771. These *Odes*, of which the complete collection embraces no less than 229 poems,[1] show essentially the same general development that is to be observed in the *Messias;* the early ones, those to his Leipzig friends and to "Fanny," are filled with the same spirit as the first three cantos of the epic. An intense religious fervour permeates them all, and

Oden, 1771.

[1] Ed. F. Muncker and J. Pawel, Stuttgart, 1889; in Hamel's edition, vol. 3 (D.N.L., 47).

even overflows into the love poetry. Later comes the calmer verse dedicated to Meta ("Cidli"), which in turn gives place to poetry inspired by the Germanic past, and, later still, to odes expressing the poet's disappointed hopes in the French Revolution. In 1758, and again in 1769, Klopstock, it may be noted, published two volumes of *Geistliche Lieder*, but they are much inferior to the *Odes*. His supreme importance for the development of German poetry is to be sought in his lyric poetry; notwithstanding his un-German metres, it was he who freed the lyric from the false classicism of the Prussian poets, and led it back to the true national form which was to reach perfection in Goethe. In poems of which *Die frühen Gräber* (1764) may be taken as a specimen, Klopstock discovered again the spring of German lyric feeling:—

Klopstock as lyric poet.

"Willkommen, o silberner Mond,
Schöner, stiller Gefährt der Nacht!
Du entfliehst? Eile nicht, bleib, Gedankenfreund!
Sehet, er bleibt, das Gewölk wallte nur hin.

Des Mayes Erwachen ist nur
Schöner noch, wie die Sommernacht,
Wenn ihm Thau, hell wie Licht, aus der Locke träuft,
Und zu dem Hügel herauf röthlich er kömt.

Ihr Edleren, ach es bewächst
Eure Maale schon ernstes Moos!
O wie war glücklich ich, als ich noch mit euch
Sahe sich röthen den Tag, schimmern die Nacht."[1]

Comparing Klopstock with Milton, Herder once remarked that a single ode by the German poet outweighed the whole lyric literature of Britain. Such a judgment, strange as it may seem to-day, is, at least, a testimony to the esteem in which Klopstock was held by his contemporaries.

Passing over the dream of a literary commonwealth embodied in Klopstock's *Deutsche Gelehrtenrepublik* (1774), one of the best of the many quixoteries of eighteenth-century literature, we have still to consider a side of his activity which appealed as strongly to his contemporaries as did the *Messias*. Klopstock wrote six dramas of which three were on Biblical themes: *Der Tod Adams* (1757), which was translated into the chief European tongues, *Salomo* (1764) and *David*

Klopstock's dramas.

[1] Hamel's edition, 3, 119.

(1772); the others were what their author called "Bardiete" — a word suggested by the *barditus* of Tacitus — and form a trilogy on the national hero Hermann or Arminius. *Hermanns Schlacht* appeared in 1769, *Hermann und die Fürsten* in 1784, and *Hermanns Tod* in 1787. These dramas, which are written in prose interspersed with "bardic" songs and choruses, possess much lyric beauty, but are in no sense dramatic. They came upon the crest of a literary movement which found its way to Germany from England, where Macpherson's *Ossian* had revealed the charm that lay in primitive literature. The first German translation of *Ossian* appeared in 1764, and kindled an enthusiasm which was even more abiding in its influence than was the Ossian-fever in England, for it awakened the German people to a serious interest in their own past.

In this "bardic" movement three other poets are associated with Klopstock: Michael Denis (1729-1800), K. F. Kretschmann (1738-1809), and H. W. von Gerstenberg (1737-1823).[1] The first and, at the same time, the last of these "bards" was Gerstenberg: the first because with the *Gedicht eines Skalden* (1766), a poem inspired by Ossian, he introduced bardic poetry to German literature; the last, because he represents the transition from Klopstock to the "Sturm und Drang." Gerstenberg was a more gifted poet than either Denis or Kretschmann, but he is now chiefly remembered by his gruesome tragedy, *Ugolino* (1768), in which the passivity of Klopstock had already given place to the drastic theatrical effects of the younger writers. To this tragedy, as well as to Gerstenberg's critical activity, we shall return. Kretschmann, the noisiest and most tasteless of the group, was but meagrely gifted. His *Gesang Rhingulfs des Barden, Als Varus geschlagen war* (1768), which was enthusiastically received on its appearance, might serve as a typical specimen of this whole class of poetry. Denis, the chief Austrian representative of the "bards," made his reputation as a translator of Ossian (1768-69), and in 1772 published a collection of his own poems under the title *Lieder Sineds des Barden* (the anagram in "Sined" being obvious). His

H. W. von Gerstenberg, 1737-1823.

K. F. Kretschmann, 1738-1809.

M. Denis, 1729-1800.

[1] *Klopstocks Hermanns Schlacht und das Bardenwesen des* 18. *Jahrh.*, ed. by R. Hamel (*Klopstocks Werke*, 4, D.N.L., 48 [1884]). On Denis, cp. P. von Hofmann-Wellenhof, *M. Denis*, Innsbruck, 1881.

services in popularising North German literature in Austria were, however, more lasting and important than his own contributions to German poetry. On the whole, the "bardic" movement was a well-meaning revolt against the artificial classicism of the Prussian school of lyric poets, but, as even contemporaries recognised, it was on too narrow a basis to become genuinely national. Within a very few years it had either been identified with the "Sturm und Drang," or its ideas had been appropriated by the members of the Göttingen "Dichterbund."

A writer who stands somewhat apart from the feverish development of German literature in the eighteenth century was Salomon Gessner (1730-88).[1] He was one of those gentle, retiring writers who, while harking back to the literary ideals of the Renaissance, shared at the same time the love for nature of his age: Gessner's *Idyllen* was the most popular German book in Europe before the appearance of *Werther*. Born in Zurich in 1730, he came to Berlin at the age of nineteen to learn the trade of a bookseller, but art and literature were more to his taste. He began by writing verses in the style of the Anacreontic school, but, following Ramler's suggestion, tried prose and found in it a congenial mode of expression. The famous *Idyllen* (1756 and 1772), the pastoral romance, *Daphnis* (1754), and even his epic on the *Tod Abels* (1758), are written, not, as might be expected, in verse, but in a delicately balanced prose. Artificial in the extreme is the rococo world of sighing shepherds and coy shepherdesses, but the power which the "Swiss Theocritus" possessed of conveying to his readers his own warm love for nature was, at least, genuine; the tentative descriptive poetry of Brockes and Haller was here raised to a higher plane.

S. Gessner, 1730-88.

[1] Ed. A. Frey in D.N.L., 41 [1884]. Cp. H. Wölfflin, *Salomon Gessner*, Frauenfeld, 1889.

CHAPTER IV.

LESSING.

G. E. Lessing, 1729-81.

In the autumn of 1746, after a promising school career at the Fürstenschule of St Afra in Meissen, Gotthold Ephraim Lessing[1] became a student of the University of Leipzig. He was in his eighteenth year, having been born at Kamenz, in the Oberlausitz in Saxony, on the 22nd of January 1729. Leipzig, as he found it, was essentially the Leipzig of the "Bremer Beiträger." Gottsched, it is true, was no longer the unquestioned dictator of German literature, but the first cantos of the *Messias* had not yet appeared. Although Lessing did not belong to the coterie which contributed to the *Beiträge*—his chief friends were Kästner the epigrammatist, and a journalist, C. Mylius—his early literary work was exclusively influenced by the Saxon school. The centre of his interests was not the university, but, to the consternation of his family—his father was a pastor—the theatre. He was on friendly terms with the actors of Frau Neuberin's company, and in the beginning of 1748 his first play, *Der junge Gelehrte*, which throws an interesting light on his own personality at this time, was publicly produced by them. The best drama of his student years is the comedy *Der Misogyn* (1748), originally in one act, but at a later date revised and extended to three; it is, however, wholly in the style and tone of the comedy of the time.

Early dramas.

Meanwhile, in his studies, Lessing turned from theology to medicine, but in 1748 his university career came to an

[1] E. Schmidt, *Lessing; Geschichte seines Lebens und seiner Schriften*, 2 vols., 2nd ed., Berlin, 1899; *Sämtliche Schriften*, edited by K. Lachmann, 3rd ed. by F. Muncker, 15 vols., Stuttgart, 1886-1900. In D.N.L., edited by R. Boxberger and H. Blümner, vols. 58-71 [1883-90].

abrupt close. His theatrical friends found themselves in difficulties and left Leipzig suddenly, and, as Lessing had become surety for part of their debts, he too was obliged to make his escape. In November he settled in Berlin, where, with the exception of the winter of 1751-52, which he spent in Wittenberg, he remained until 1755. In Berlin, Lessing's interest in the theatre was unabated, but the original plays written at this time show little advance upon what he had already done. Two alone still possess some interest, *Der Freygeist* (1749), which treats a theme that lay near to Lessing's heart—namely, that a freethinker need not be a villain—and *Die Juden* (1749), a forerunner of *Nathan der Weise*. His lesser poetical attempts, which were published in 1751, under the title *Kleinigkeiten*, are not, with the exception of some of the epigrams, conspicuously original.

Lessing in Berlin.

In conjunction with Mylius, who had become editor of the *Berlinische privilegirte Zeitung*, Lessing planned a quarterly journal with the title *Beyträge zur Historie und Aufnahme des Theaters* (1750). The plan, however, was on too vast a scale to be successful; only four parts appeared, the chief contents of which were a *Leben des Plautus*, and a translation and criticism of the *Captivi*, all by Lessing himself. In the preface to these *Beyträge*—dated October, 1749—Lessing first stated his opinion that the future of the German national theatre lay in an imitation of the English rather than of the French drama. His best critical writing during this period appeared in the *Berlinische privilegirte Zeitung*, and in a monthly supplement of this paper, *Das Neueste aus dem Reiche des Witzes*, which was written exclusively by Lessing from April to December, 1751. In these book-reviews, which cover the entire field of literature, Lessing's genius first reveals itself. His attitude towards the literature of his time is strictly impartial; he belongs to no school. His judgments are clear and decisive, and expressed with a terseness and directness hitherto unknown in German literary criticism. In 1753, Lessing, feeling his position as a man of letters assured, began to publish a collected edition of his *Schrifften* (6 vols., 1753-55). In the second of these volumes he had criticised briefly a translation of Horace by S. G. Lange, who has been already mentioned as joint-author with Pyra of the *Freundschaftlichen Lieder*. Lange

First critical writings, 1749-55.

resented Lessing's criticism, and contemptuously described his works, owing to the small size of the volumes, as "Vademecums." Lessing promptly replied with an annihilating *Vade Mecum für den Hrn. Sam. Gotth. Lange* (1754), in which he submitted the translation to a searching criticism and completely destroyed Lange's small literary prestige as the head of the older Halle school.

Vade Mecum für S. G. Lange, 1754.

The last part of Lessing's residence in Berlin was one of the brightest periods in his life; his work met with encouraging success, and in these years he made two of his warmest friendships, with Mendelssohn and Nicolai. Moses Mendelssohn (1729-86), who had fought his way with heroic perseverance from a humble rank to a position of respect and influence in the intellectual life of the capital, is best remembered by his *Phädon* (1767),[1] a popular treatise in the form of conversations on the immortality of the soul, but two years earlier he had published a volume of letters *Über die Empfindung*. In the essay entitled *Pope ein Metaphysiker!* (1755), which he wrote in conjunction with Lessing, the line of argument is obviously Lessing's, not Mendelssohn's. C. F. Nicolai (1733-1811)[2] was a bookseller of Berlin, and, in his earlier years, as Lessing's friend and ally, he exerted a healthy influence on the development of literature; he also wrote a novel, the celebrated *Sebaldus Nothanker* (1773), which, although not so much a story as a rationalistic tract against orthodoxy, gives an admirable picture of the time, and his *Beschreibung einer Reise durch Deutschland und die Schweiz* (1783), which in a subsequent edition was extended to twelve volumes, has a similar interest. Later, as the chief representative of rationalism in literature, Nicolai parodied *Werther*, was the butt of many of Goethe and Schiller's *Xenien*, and fought tooth and nail against the young Romantic school. In company with these two friends, Lessing began in 1759 the *Briefe die neueste Litteratur betreffend*, a review to which we shall return shortly. But before this date he had opened the series of his writings on theological subjects with a volume of *Rettungen* (1753-54) —vindications of thinkers whose reputations had suffered

Moses Mendelssohn, 1729-86.

C. F. Nicolai, 1733-1811.

Lessing's *Rettungen*, 1753-54.

[1] J. Minor, *Fabeldichter, Satiriker und Popularphilosophen des 18. Jahrh.* (D.N.L., 73 [1884]), 211 ff.

[2] J. Minor, *Lessings Jugendfreunde* (D.N.L., 72 [1883]), 275 ff.

under the bigotry of theologians—and, under the influence of Voltaire, with whom he had come into personal contact a year or two before, he became a zealous partisan in the chief intellectual conflict of his time, that between orthodoxy and rationalism.

In 1755 Lessing again came forward as a dramatist, this time with a work which occupies almost as prominent a position in the history of the German drama as the *Messias* in German poetry; *Miss Sara Sampson, ein bürgerliches Trauerspiel*, gave the deathblow to the dramatic theories of Gottsched's school, and laid the foundation of a national drama. This play was a practical illustration of Lessing's assertion that the salvation of the drama was only to be effected by shaking off the trammels of French classicism and imitating the freer, more natural style of the English drama. The "bürgerliche Trauerspiel" itself, the tragedy of common life, was an English growth, and it was George Lillo's *Merchant of London* (1731), the most popular English play of this class, which suggested to Lessing the form and outline of *Miss Sara Sampson*. In another English source, Richardson's *Clarissa* (1740), he found a model for his heroine and the tearful sentimentality which appealed to the taste of the time. The plot of *Miss Sara Sampson*, which was produced at Frankfort-on-the-Oder on the 10th of July 1755, before an audience bathed in tears, is briefly as follows. Sara has eloped with her lover Mellefont—Lessing borrows the names of all his characters from Congreve or Richardson—and they are living together at an inn, where Marwood, a former mistress of Mellefont's, discovers them. She informs Sara's father of his daughter's hiding-place and induces Mellefont to grant her an interview with Sara. Under a false name, Marwood endeavours to enlist Sara's sympathy on her own behalf and to turn her against her lover. When she hears that Sampson is willing to forgive his daughter, she again visits Sara and poisons her. Sara dies at her father's feet and Mellefont stabs himself with a dagger which he has wrested from Marwood. The sentiment of *Miss Sara Sampson* is in the highest degree lachrymose, its dialogue often tedious, and its character-drawing crude; in less than twenty years it was out of date. But it was the forerunner of *Emilia Galotti* and *Kabale und Liebe*, and the first of those plays of social life and social problems

Miss Sara Sampson, 1755.

which, since the end of the eighteenth century, have formed a constant element in the dramatic literature of Northern Europe.

Die Theatralische Bibliothek, 1754-58.

The theoretical background of *Miss Sara Sampson* is to be found in the *Theatralische Bibliothek* (1754-58). This, Lessing's second dramatic review, was hardly more successful than its predecessor, but its contents were attractive. It opened with a treatise, *Von dem weinerlichen oder rührenden Lustspiele*, discussed Thomson, Dryden, Destouches, Seneca, and neglected neither the Spanish nor the Italian drama. Lessing, however, had not yet realised the greatness of Shakespeare.

Again in Leipzig.

Between the production of *Miss Sara Sampson* and the summer of 1758 Lessing was mainly in Leipzig, where Ewald von Kleist and he became warm friends; he had also the prospect of seeing Europe as travelling companion to a young man of wealth, but the Seven Years' War broke out before the travellers had got very far and necessitated a speedy return. In Leipzig the drama was again the centre of his interests, but none of his own plans ripened until later. Although the playwrights whom Lessing found there were not likely to throw the author of *Miss Sara Sampson* into the shade, they were, none the less, more gifted than the "Bremer Beiträger" of his student days. J. F. von Cronegk (1731-58), the author of a prize tragedy *Codrus* and an unfinished *Olint und Sophronia*, belonged to the classical school of Gottsched, but his verse is of a higher order. Lessing himself hoped much from J. W. von Brawe (1738-58), a scholar of his own, who, although he died when he was only twenty, left two plays of remarkable promise, *Der Freygeist*, a "bürgerliches Trauerspiel," and *Brutus*, one of the earliest plays in the rhymeless iambics of the German classical drama. C. F. Weisse (1726-1804), again, had been a fellow-student of Lessing's at the University, and together they had translated French tragedies for Frau Neuberin. Weisse had considerable talent as a writer for the stage, but he preferred to exercise it in those easy compromises that lead to popular success; his literary ideals were neither high nor stable. His most frequently played tragedies, *Richard III.* (1759) and *Romeo und Julie* (1767), are adaptations from Shakespeare. Weisse had more success with

J. F. von Cronegk, 1731-58.

J. W. von Brawe, 1738-58.

C. F. Weisse, 1726-1804.

another form of dramatic literature—he was virtually the creator of the modern German "Singspiel." *Die Jagd* (1770) and *Die Liebe auf dem Lande* (1768), for which J. A. Hiller (1728-1804) composed the music, were long favourite pieces on the German stage.[1]

After Kleist's death, Leipzig lost its attraction for Lessing, and in May, 1758, he returned to the old friends in Berlin. The principal event of his third period of residence here was his share in the *Briefe die neueste Litteratur betreffend* (1759-65). This was virtually a literary periodical in the form of letters addressed to a fictitious officer who was assumed to have been wounded in the war. In the early numbers, the three friends, Nicolai, Mendelssohn, and Lessing contributed the entire contents; when Lessing's connection with the review ceased—he wrote, in all, fifty-four letters—his place was taken by Thomas Abbt, to whom we shall return in a subsequent chapter. Lessing's contributions to the *Litteraturbriefe* form one of the monuments of eighteenth-century criticism; here is concentrated all that was best in the æsthetic theories of that century—the revolt against classicism and the return to the antique, the effort to be natural and true, the striving towards law and method. Lessing's criticisms cover most of the important publications of the day: Wieland and Klopstock are admirably judged; the historical tragedy, the wretched quality of translations, the pretensions of the theologians of Copenhagen headed by Cramer, are discussed with clearness and logical precision. Above all, Shakespeare is defended against the accusation of barbarism brought against him by the "classical" critics, and in one of the most brilliant paradoxes in the history of criticism, Lessing boldly asserts that Shakespeare more faithfully observed the Aristotelian laws than Corneille and Racine. He saw more promise for the German drama in the popular pieces which Gottsched would have banished, than in imitations of French classics; and as a proof, he quoted the fragment of a drama by himself on the subject of *Faust* (1759), which gives noble expression to the ideals of the "Aufklärung."

Die Litteratur briefe, 1759-65.

[1] On Weisse, Cronegk and Brawe, with selections from their writings, cp. J. Minor, *Lessings Jugendfreunde* (D.N.L., 72 [1883]); on Brawe see also A. Sauer's monograph in *Quellen und Forschungen* 30, Strassburg, 1878, and on Weisse, J. Minor, *C. F. Weisse und seine Beziehungen zur deutschen Litteratur des 18. Jahrh.*, Innsbruck, 1880.

Lessing's *Literary Letters*, although their spirit is purely of the eighteenth century, are, in the essentials of method, the foundation of modern criticism. Here, for the first time, an attempt is made to criticise reasonably and scientifically, to keep the judgment free from the tyranny of tradition on the one hand, and from empiricism on the other. In these letters is to be found the justification for Macaulay's claim that Lessing was "the first critic in Europe."

The *Literary Letters* did not occupy all Lessing's attention at this time. In collaboration with Ramler, he edited Logau's *Epigrams;* he also translated Diderot's dramatic works, published a collection of prose *Fabeln* (1759) of his own, introduced by an essay on the Fable, and completed *Philotas* (1759), a tragic dramatic episode in one act, inspired by the war. In the autumn of 1760 he left Berlin once more, having accepted the remunerative position of secretary to General Tauentzien, the governor of Breslau. Here (1760-65) his two next important works, the *Laokoon* and *Minna von Barnhelm*, were in great part written.

Fabeln, Philotas, 1759.

In the *Laokoon*, Lessing is associated with another of the master-minds of the eighteenth century, Johann Joachim Winckelmann.[1] The son of a poor shoemaker, Winckelmann was born at Stendal in the Mark of Brandenburg on December 9, 1717. With a heroism and singleness of purpose, which is to be seen in so many men of the eighteenth century, he made his way first to Dresden, and, in 1755, to Rome; in 1768, he was assassinated in Trieste. Although an intellectual force of the first order, Winckelmann had strangely little in common with the leading spirits of his century. Not merely his interests, but even his temperament and character, were different from theirs; indeed, the secret of his ability to see antique art with the eyes of its creators lay, perhaps, in the fact that he was himself something of a Greek. His master-work, the *Geschichte der Kunst des Alterthums* (1764), one of the most potent books of the eighteenth century, laid the foundation of the history of art, regarded as a branch of knowledge. According to modern ideas, Winckelmann's creed was a somewhat narrow one, his de-

J. J. Winckelmann, 1717-68.

Die Kunst des Alterthums, 1764.

[1] K. Justi, *Winckelmann, sein Leben, seine Werke und seine Zeitgenossen*, 3 vols., 2nd ed., Leipzig, 1898. A convenient reprint of the *Gedanken über die Nachahmung* will be found in the *Litteraturdenkm.*, 20, Heilbronn, 1885.

preciation of the Renaissance masters unjust, but no one in the history of any art or science achieved so much single-handed; he has been well compared with old navigators who discovered unknown continents. While still in Dresden, Winckelmann declared war against the rococo, and in his first work, *Gedancken über die Nachahmung der Griechischen Wercke in der Mahlerey und Bildhauer-Kunst* (1754), he wrote the famous words which, like a magic key, opened the world of ancient art to the eighteenth century:—

"Das allgemeine vorzügliche Kennzeichen der Griechischen Meisterstücke ist eine edle Einfalt, und eine stille Grösse, so wohl in der Stellung als im Ausdruck. So wie die Tiefe des Meers allezeit ruhig bleibt, die Oberfläche mag noch so wüten, eben so zeiget der Ausdruck in den Figuren der Griechen bey allen Leidenschaften eine grosse und gesetzte Seele."[1]

Der Laokoon, 1766.

This statement forms the nucleus of Lessing's *Laokoon: oder über die Grenzen der Mahlerey und Poesie* (1766),[2] only the first part of which was ever completed. Winckelmann had compared unfavourably the agonising cries in Virgil's description of Laokoon and his sons with the silent suffering of the plastic figures; Lessing pointed out that the aim of Virgil, as of the unknown sculptor of the Laokoon—the aim of Sophocles, whose Philoktetes is also not a silent sufferer—was "beauty," and that the difference between their manner of expressing pain was an inevitable consequence of the nature of their art. The sculptor who appeals solely to the eye is obliged to express a feeling or sentiment by other means than the poet who appeals to the mind through the ear: the medium of the one artist is space, in which everything can be said at once; the other has to express himself in time, that is to say, one thought follows the other. The supreme importance of Lessing's treatise, which at bottom is a supplement to, rather than a contradiction of, Winckelmann's work, is that it swept away the confused ideas that existed as to the proper province of poetry. Owing to too literal an interpretation of Horace's "ut pictura poesis," descriptive poetry which aimed solely at doing what the painter could do far better, had long been rampant in European literature; Lessing gave such poetry its deathblow. Many of the ideas of the

[1] Reprint, 24.
[2] Ed. H. Blümner, 2nd ed., Berlin, 1880.

Laokoon, it is true, have lost their force beside the more catholic æsthetics of Romanticism, but, by defining the boundaries of the various arts, Lessing introduced a new principle into æsthetics which influenced the whole later development of the science.

Minna von Barnhelm, 1767.

Lessing's position as a critic was now established beyond question, and, shortly after the *Laokoon*, he published another work which at once placed him at the head of the dramatic writers of his time. *Minna von Barnhelm*, the first masterpiece of German comedy, was written chiefly in Breslau in 1763, but did not appear until 1767, in the new edition of Lessing's works. "If," wrote Lessing to Ramler, "it is not better than all my former dramatic pieces, I am firmly resolved to have nothing more to do with the theatre,"[1] and his confidence in his new work was certainly not misplaced. *Minna von Barnhelm*, although, like all Lessing's creative work, open to the criticism of being deficient in originality, is, none the less, a masterpiece of eighteenth-century comedy. Lessing had not the inventive faculty of the born poet; his motives, his situations, and characters are reminiscent of his vast reading in the dramatic literature of Europe. Shakespeare, Farquhar, Molière, and Goldoni have all contributed to the plot and motives of *Minna von Barnhelm;* but what is best about the drama is its close touch with the events and ideas of the time. It is, as Goethe said, "die wahrste Ausgeburt des siebenjährigen Krieges, die erste, aus dem bedeutenden Leben gegriffene Theaterproduction, von specifisch temporärem Gehalt."[2] The characters of the play, whatever may have been their models, are themselves living and actual. Major von Tellheim, the Prussian officer with the extraordinarily keen sense of honour, was undoubtedly modelled on Lessing's friend Kleist, and Just and Werner are not less convincing portraits of the men who fought under Frederick the Great. Tellheim has been dismissed at the close of the war under circumstances which unjustly reflect upon his good name; his sense of honour forbids him to hold Minna von Barnhelm, a Saxon heiress, to her engagement with him. She, however, accompanied by her maid Franziska and her uncle, who does not appear until the

[1] Letter of August 20, 1764.
[2] *Dichtung und Wahrheit*, 7 (*Werke* 27, 107).

close of the drama, comes to Berlin and alights at the same inn where Tellheim has taken up his quarters. Indeed, she is the unwitting cause of Tellheim being turned out of his rooms by the avaricious innkeeper, who prefers the new guests to a disbanded officer of uncertain means. Indignant at the treatment to which he is subjected, Tellheim moves to another inn, leaving the landlord a ring as payment of his debt. The landlord shows the ring to Minna, who at once recognises it and advances the required sum upon it. She arranges a meeting with Tellheim without, of course, revealing her name. The major is taken by surprise, but is not to be moved from his intention; in vain Minna endeavours to show him that his ideas of honour are exaggerated:—

"*V. Tellheim.* Hören Sie, mein Fräulein. Sie nennen mich Tellheim; der Name trift ein. Aber Sie meynen, ich sey der Tellheim, den Sie in Ihrem Vaterlande gekannt haben; der blühende Mann, voller Ansprüche, voller Ruhmbegierde; der seines ganzen Körpers, seiner ganzen Seele mächtig war; vor dem die Schranken der Ehre und des Glückes eröffnet standen: der Ihres Herzens und Ihrer Hand, wann er schon ihrer noch nicht würdig war, täglich würdiger zu werden hoffen durfte. Dieser Tellheim bin ich eben so wenig,—als ich mein Vater bin. Beide sind gewesen. Ich bin Tellheim, der verabschiedete, der an seiner Ehre gekränkte, der Krüppel, der Bettler. Jenem, mein Fräulein, versprachen Sie Sich; wollen Sie diesem Wort halten?

"*Das Fräulein.* Das klingt sehr tragisch! Doch, mein Herr, bis ich jenen wieder finde,—in die Tellheims bin ich nun einmal vernarret,—dieser wird mir schon aus der Noth helfen müssen. Deine Hand, lieber Bettler! (*indem sie ihn bey der Hand ergreift*).

"*V. Tellheim* (*der die andere Hand mit dem Hute vor das Gesicht schlägt, und sich von ihr abwendet*). Das ist zu viel! Wo bin ich? Lassen Sie mich, Fräulein! Ihre Güte foltert mich! Lassen Sie mich."[1]

Minna has recourse to strategy. She bids her maid disclose to Tellheim that her engagement with him, a Prussian officer, has led to her being disinherited by her uncle. This sweeps all Tellheim's pride away and brings him to Minna's feet at once; but it is now her turn to stand upon her dignity. She refuses to be a burden to him and returns him his ring. A letter arrives from the king exonerating Tellheim from blame and reinstating him in his position; but still Minna vows she will not take back the ring she

[1] Act 2, sc. (*Werke*, ed. K. Lachmann and F. Muncker, 2, 205).

has returned to him. Ultimately Tellheim recognises in it his own ring which he had given to the landlord. Such, in outline, is the plot of *Minna von Barnhelm*, one of the very few comedies of the eighteenth century which still have power to interest a modern audience.

Had Lessing completed his *Laokoon*, he would probably have devoted considerable space to the drama; he might perhaps even have paved the way for a right understanding of the nature of ancient tragedy, and have suggested the possibility —which Herder discovered a few years later—of a revival of Greek ideals in the modern music-drama. It is significant that just at this time a German musician, C. W. von Gluck (1714-87), had taken the first steps towards such a revival. Gluck's opera *Orfeo ed Euridice* was produced at Vienna in 1762, his *Alceste* with its famous preface in 1767, and his two operas on the subject of *Iphigenia* in 1774 and 1779. While it is open to doubt whether Lessing would have discussed the music-drama, it may at least be assumed that much of what was intended for the *Laokoon* passed over into the *Hamburgische Dramaturgie* (1767-68).

C. W. von Gluck, 1714-87.

In 1767, a number of wealthy Hamburg citizens resolved to establish in that city a German National Theatre, and Lessing accepted the appointment of critic and literary adviser. From the beginning, however, the theatre was little better than a failure, and after about eighteen months it was compelled to close its doors; but the Hamburg experiment occupies an honourable place in the history of the German drama as the first attempt to nationalise the theatre. And to Lessing's connection with it we owe the *Hamburgische Dramaturgie*.[1] His first intention was to write a running commentary upon the work of the theatre, criticising both plays and actors; but it soon became clear that his position as salaried official made it difficult for him honestly to express his opinion on such points, and his criticism was thus ultimately limited to literary and dramaturgic questions. The *Hamburgische Dramaturgie* may be regarded as a continuation of what Lessing had begun in his two earlier dramatic periodicals; here he denies emphatically, and with the enthusiasm

Die Hamburgische Dramaturgie, 1767-68.

[1] Ed. F. Schröter and R. Thiele, 2 vols., Halle, 1877-78; cp. W. Cosack, *Materialien zu Lessings Hamburgischer Dramaturgie*, 2nd ed., Paderborn, 1891.

of a reformer rather than with the unbiassed calm of a critic, that the French classical tragedy is dramatic poetry of the first order; he opens the eyes of his countrymen to the greatness of Shakespeare, and grasps, as no one before him had done, the true meaning of Aristotle's *Poetics*.

After the ill-success of the Hamburg theatre, Lessing never again took an active interest in the fortunes of the German stage. Towards the end of 1771, however, he took up a play, which, intended for the theatre in Hamburg, had been partly written there. This was *Emilia Galotti* (1772), a modern version of the story of Virginia, to which Lessing had been attracted in earlier years. Like *Miss Sara Sampson*, *Emilia Galotti* is a "bürgerliches Trauerspiel"; but while the former was still tentative, and essentially English, the new drama is, in the best sense, a national German tragedy, even although the scene is laid at an Italian Court. The Prince of Guastalla loves the daughter of Odoardo Galotti, but learns that she is on the point of marrying a Count Appiani. The prince's chamberlain, Marinelli, conceives a plot by means of which the marriage may be frustrated; he causes the carriage containing Count Appiani, Emilia, and her mother to be waylaid near a country residence of the prince. The count is shot and Emilia carried to the castle on the pretence that she is being rescued. Her father, however, learns the prince's designs from Orsina, a forsaken mistress of the latter, and, rather than leave his daughter to the prince's mercy, stabs her. The weak point of *Emilia Galotti* is its denouement; it is questionable, indeed, if any dramatist could justify the murder of Virginia in the eyes of a modern audience, and Lessing was certainly not able to do so. Apart from this, *Emilia Galotti* is an admirable tragedy; its construction is masterly, and two at least of its characters, Marinelli and Orsina, take rank with the best in German dramatic literature. Of all Lessing's work, it had most influence upon the subsequent development of the drama, being, as we shall see, in some measure a forerunner of the "Sturm und Drang."

Emilia Galotti, 1772.

Lessing ceased, after the production of *Emilia Galotti*, it might be said, to be an active factor in the literary movement. It was given to him no more than to his predecessors to keep pace with the rapid growth of German

literature in the eighteenth century; but he never ceased to fight for that spiritual freedom which always seemed to him the end and aim of the "education of humanity." While in Hamburg, he had become involved in a conflict with a professor of the University of Halle, C. A. Klotz, who had a reputation as an authority on antiquarian questions. This resulted in two volumes of *Briefe antiquarischen Inhalts* (1768), which, in 1769, were followed by the beautiful study on *Wie die Alten den Tod gebildet.* In 1770, Lessing accepted the position of Court librarian in Brunswick, and with the exception of a journey to Vienna, Rome, and Naples in 1775, Wolfenbüttel remained his home for the rest of his life. In 1777, he married Eva König, the widow of one of his Hamburg friends, but she died in little more than a year. In the beginning of 1778 his own health broke down, and he survived his wife only three years, dying in Brunswick on the 15th of February, 1781. The last years of his life were embittered by incessant theological controversy. In 1773, he issued the first volume of his contributions *Zur Geschichte und Litteratur*, in which, in the spirit of the *Rettungen* of earlier years, he brought to light unknown or unjustly forgotten treasures of the library under his care. In the third and fourth volumes of this work, Lessing published a series of fragments by a writer whose name, H. S. Reimarus (1694-1768), was not disclosed for nearly forty years. The fragments discussed religious questions in a rationalistic spirit, and Lessing soon openly avowed his sympathy for the unnamed champion of intellectual freedom. The hostility of the German theological world was again awakened, and J. M. Goeze, the chief pastor of Hamburg, came forward to vindicate the cause of orthodoxy against the freethinking playwright. Lessing's share in the fierce conflict which raged round him is, in many ways, the most remarkable achievement of his whole life, for he had to fight single-handed, rationalist and theologian being alike embittered against him. The writings called forth by this controversy in 1778 — *Eine Duplik*, *Eine Parabel*, *Axiomata*, and the *Anti-Goeze*[1]—have never been surpassed in the literature of theological controversy. Amongst the other prose works of

Briefe antiquarischen Inhalts, 1768.

Zur Geschichte und Litteratur, 1773-81.

The controversy with Goeze.

[1] *Werke*, 13; Goeze's share in the controversy has been published by E. Schmidt (*Litteraturdenkmale*, 43-45, Leipzig, 1893).

Lessing's last years, the most important are *Ernst und Falk: Gespräche für Freymäurer* (1778), and the hundred paragraphs on *Die Erziehung des Menschengeschlechts*, which appeared complete in 1780.

But before his life closed he turned once more to his first love, the drama. In 1779, *Nathan der Weise* was published, a play which clothes in poetic form the ideas underlying all Lessing's controversial writings. But it would be unjust to regard *Nathan* as nothing more than a "Tendenzdrama." The nucleus of the plot was a fable which Lessing found in the *Decamerone* of Boccaccio. In the third act Nathan relates how a certain man possessed a ring of magic power, which rendered all who believed in its virtue pleasing to God and man. This man had three sons whom he loved equally well, and, being unwilling to enrich one at the expense of the others, caused two other rings to be made exactly like the first. The sons, after their father's death, dispute as to which of them possesses the true ring—just as Christian, Jew, and Mohammedan disputed regarding the possession of the true religion—and the judge advises each of them to believe that his ring is the genuine one, and to act accordingly. Turning now to Saladin, who has summoned him to an audience, Nathan points the moral of his tale—

Nathan der Weise, 1779.

"Mein Rath ist aber der: ihr nehmt
Die Sache völlig wie sie liegt. Hat von
Euch jeder seinen Ring von seinem Vater:
So glaube jeder sicher seinen Ring
Den echten. Möglich; dass der Vater nun
Die Tyranney des Einen Rings nicht länger
In seinem Hause dulden wollen! Und gewiss;
Dass er euch alle drey geliebt, und gleich
Geliebt: indem er zwey nicht drücken mögen,
Um einen zu begünstigen. Wohlan!
Es eifre jeder seiner unbestochnen
Von Vorurtheilen freyen Liebe nach!
Es strebe von euch jeder um die Wette,
Die Kraft des Steins in seinem Ring' an Tag
Zu legen! komme dieser Kraft mit Sanftmuth,
Mit herzlicher Verträglichkeit, mit Wohlthun
Mit innigster Ergebenheit in Gott,
Zu Hülf'!"[1]

The three types of religion are represented in the play by the Mohammedan Saladin, Nathan the Jew, and a young

[1] Act 3, sc. 7 (*Werke*, 3, 94 f.)

Templar; Recha, the adopted daughter of the Jew, ultimately proves to be a Christian and the Templar's sister. The characters are brought almost artificially into relations with one another; there is little plot, and what there is turns upon improbabilities. Written in the rhymeless iambics of the German classic drama,[1] *Nathan der Weise* is less a play for the stage than a dramatic poem; its worth lies in its ideas, its lofty humanity and wise tolerance. Such a poem could only have been produced by a man who, himself a "soldier in the Liberation War of humanity," had been chastened by suffering and had learned the bitter lessons of life.

Thus, from whatever side Lessing's activity is regarded, we find that it sums up all that was best in the movement of the century. In this writer, the revolt against the artificial classicism of the later Renaissance and the return to the true antique celebrated triumphs; in his criticism of literature and art, he expressed the ripest judgments of the eighteenth century; while as a creative artist he laid, single-handed, the foundations of the modern German drama. He broke the yoke of that intellectual tyranny which, at the beginning of the eighteenth century, had once more lain heavy on the land of Luther, and thus prepared the way for the founder of modern thought, Immanuel Kant. Lessing is the supreme representative of the intellectual life and ideals of the German "Aufklärung," but he may also be said to mark the end of a period. Before his career had reached its close, a new epoch in intellectual history had begun, that which, in after years, was known as "Sturm und Drang."

[1] Cp. note on p. 337.

CHAPTER V.

WIELAND; MINOR PROSE WRITERS.

The writings of Wieland stand somewhat apart from the literature of his time. He is an anomaly in German letters, but one on which much depended. Like Hagedorn in the generation before him, like Heinse a little later, and like a number of writers of the nineteenth century, from Hölderlin down to C. F. Meyer and Friedrich Nietzsche in our own day, he was the representative of an un-German, a Latin, element in the literature. It was largely due to him that the turbulent spirit of the new movement did not outstep all bounds; he helped to counterbalance, not only the moralising sentimentality, which, between 1750 and 1760, came in Richardson's train, but also the extravagant nature-worship of Rousseau which swept across Germany some years afterwards. Wieland's work formed the antidote to the overweening nationalism of the "Sturm und Drang"—a nationalism which, unchecked, might have debarred German classical literature from taking its place among the great literatures of the world.

C. M. Wieland, 1733-1813.

Christoph Martin Wieland[1] was born in the village of Oberholzheim, near Biberach in Würtemberg, on the 5th of September, 1733, and grew up under pietistic influences and in the literary atmosphere which had been created by Richardson and Klopstock. This, too, is the atmosphere of his own early literary productions (*Anti-Ovid*, 1752; *Der gepryfte Abraham*, 1753). In October, 1752, he accepted an invitation from Bodmer to visit Zurich. After spending some six or seven months under

In Zurich.

[1] Wieland's *Werke*, edited by H. Düntzer, 40 vols., Berlin, 1879-82. Selections by F. Muncker, 6 vols., Stuttgart, 1889, and H. Pröhle, in D.N.L., 51-56 [1883-87]. A critical biography of Wieland has yet to be written. Cp. the article in the *Allgem. deutsche Biographie*, 42 [1897], by M. Koch.

Bodmer's hospitable roof, he obtained a tutorship in Zurich, and remained there for the next five years. From Zurich he went to Berne, where he became intimate with Rousseau's friend, Julie de Bondeli, and, in 1760, received the appointment of "Kanzleidirektor" in what was virtually his native town, Biberach. The patronage extended to Wieland by a Graf von Stadion, whose seat, Warthausen, was in the neighbourhood of Biberach, seems to have been one reason of the change that came over him about this time. Graf von Stadion, whose own literary culture was chiefly French, admired his verses, and introduced him to a world of ideas very different from that in which he had lived in Zurich. The English deists and the French encyclopedists, who were well represented in the Graf's library, began to take the place of Klopstock in Wieland's affections; he discovered that his true affinities were not Richardson and Young, but Gay and Prior, Ariosto, Cervantes, and Voltaire. The Germanic past, in which Klopstock had once awakened his interest, was forgotten for the world of Greek antiquity which remained his favourite study for the rest of his life. To Voltaire, Wieland also owed his first acquaintance with Shakespeare, whose works at once roused his enthusiasm; and between 1762 and 1766, he published a translation of twenty-two of Shakespeare's dramas. Although in prose and only tolerably adequate, this translation of Wieland's first made the German people acquainted with Shakespeare. In 1775-77, it was superseded by the more complete version by J. J. Eschenburg, which, twenty years later, had to yield in turn to that of A. W. Schlegel.

Translation of Shakespeare, 1762-66.

Wieland not only broke with his youthful pietism, but went to the opposite extreme; he looked back on his enthusiasm for the *Messias* with a sneer, and his poetry became frivolous and cynical. The first result of his conversion was a novel which takes a prominent place in the evolution of German fiction, *Der Sieg der Natur über die Schwärmerey oder die Abentheuer des Don Sylvio von Rosalva* (1764). Wieland's model was *Don Quixote;* Don Sylvio believes in the existence of fairies and goes out into the world to discover them. His adventures, the earlier ones at least, are described with great charm, and the language of the book—perhaps the most important thing about it—is much superior to

Don Sylvio von Rosalva, 1764.

the German prose that was written at the middle of the eighteenth century. From the Romance literatures he loved, Wieland had learned the lesson of style.

The *Geschichte des Agathon* (1766-67), Wieland's next novel, established his fame. Like so much of his work, *Agathon* has a Greek background, but the author's conceptions of the antique never advanced far beyond the somewhat superficial views in vogue before Winckelmann. His Greek novels are only Greek in costume and scenery, and sometimes not even that; in other respects, they are saturated with the rationalism of the eighteenth century. Agathon, a beautiful Athenian youth, who has been brought up in the tenets of Plato's philosophy, is carried off by pirates to Smyrna, where the Epicurean, Hippias, endeavours to convert him to materialism. Although proof against Hippias's teaching, he falls under the spell of the *hetaira* Danaë. Fleeing from her, he comes to the Court of Dionysius of Sicily, where he learns something of political life, but his political experiments involve him in difficulties, and he is thrown into prison. He is ultimately set free by the Pythagorean Archytas, who initiates him into the true wisdom—namely, that rationalistic hedonism which formed Wieland's personal creed. The *Geschichte des Agathon* fulfilled the promise of *Don Sylvio;* it was received with enthusiasm, and even Lessing welcomed it in his *Hamburgische Dramaturgie* as "der erste und einzige Roman für den denkenden Kopf, von klassischem Geschmacke." In *technique*, however, it stands on the same level as the older fiction; the plot depends on improbabilities and coincidences, and the lengthy discussions on the nature of virtue make it still essentially a "moral" novel of the Richardsonian type. Nevertheless, Wieland first gave German fiction that psychological character which it has never since lost.

Agathon, 1766-67.

"Wir haben uns," he says at the beginning of the ninth chapter of Book xii., "zum Gesetz gemacht, die Leser dieser Geschichte nicht bloss mit den Begebenheiten und Thaten unsers Helden zu unterhalten, sondern ihnen auch von dem, was bey den wichtigern Abschnitten seines Lebens in seinem Innern vorging, alles mitzutheilen, was die Quellen, woraus wir schöpfen, uns davon an die Hand geben." [1]

[1] *Werke*, 3, 72.

Here is to be found the importance of *Agathon* for the development of fiction; it is the first conspicuously psychological novel, and, as such, the forerunner of *Wilhelm Meister*.

Between 1769 and 1772, Wieland was Professor of Philosophy at the University of Erfurt. In the last-mentioned year he published a strange book which contains much serious theorising on political government, in a fantastic framework suggested by the *Arabian Nights*. This work, *Der Goldne Spiegel oder die Könige von Scheschian*, decided Wieland's future; it attracted the attention of the Duchess Amalie of Weimar, and, on its recommendation, she invited Wieland to be tutor to her two sons, Karl August and Constantin. With the exception of a few years in the neighbouring village of Ossmannstädt, where he had purchased an estate, Wieland spent the remainder of his life in Weimar, dying there in 1813.

Der Goldne Spiegel, 1772.

His next prose work, *Die Abderiten*, appeared in 1774, the year in which Goethe's *Werther* took the world by storm. Of all Wieland's prose works, *Die Abderiten, eine sehr wahrscheinliche Geschichte*, is the most attractive to the modern reader, but it interests now principally as a satire. The doings of the inhabitants of ancient Abdera, who were famed for their excessive stupidity, give Wieland an opportunity for satirising the German provincial life of his time. The Abderites build, for instance, a beautiful fountain, but neglect to furnish it with water; they purchase a Venus by Praxiteles, but place it on so high a pedestal that it cannot be seen. Even Demokritos himself, the laughing philosopher, who was a native of Abdera, is not spared by the gossiping citizens. More amusing and successful is the description of the theatre of the town, which was added to the later edition (1777) of the novel, after the author had had experiences of his own in producing *Rosamund* (published 1778) at Mannheim. The Abderites believe that a performance of the *Andromeda* of Euripides, which has been given in their theatre, cannot be surpassed. A stranger in the audience ventures to laugh at it, and only escapes the wrath of the insulted populace by revealing himself to be the author of the play, and by showing them how it ought to be performed. A still more amusing episode is that of the ass's shadow. A dentist hires an ass to carry him to a neighbouring town. He

Die Abderiten, 1774.

has to cross a treeless plain, and as the day is hot, he dismounts, to rest in the shadow of the ass. The driver of the ass objects, on the ground that the ass and not its shadow has been hired. A lawsuit ensues, and the whole town is divided into two parties, the "Asses" and the "Shadows"; excitement runs high, and ultimately the affair is brought to a conclusion by the slaughter of the unoffending ass. The book closes with the traditional act of Abderite folly: the inhabitants abandon their town to the sacred frogs of Latona, because they hold it impious to kill them. In the *Abderiten*, Wieland's style has already lost its conciseness, and inclines to those long and unwieldy sentences for which Goethe and Schiller satirised him in one of the *Xenien*.[1] In *Aristipp und einige seiner Zeitgenossen* (1800-2), which is rather a didactic treatise than a novel, the faults of his style and method are still more accentuated: for the last twenty-five years of his life he was no longer in touch with the movement of German literature, and devoted himself mainly to translating from Greek and Latin.

Aristipp, 1800-2.

Die Abderiten appeared in the *Teutsche Merkur*, a review which Wieland edited and published from 1773 to 1789. Modelled on the famous *Mercure de France*, this was practically the first modern review devoted to *belles lettres* in Germany, and helped largely to mould public opinion and taste in Germany and Austria. Most of Wieland's own literary work, from 1773 onwards, first appeared in its pages, and its critical and political articles show how carefully he followed the progress of events in Europe, political as well as literary.

Der Teutsche Merkur, 1773-89.

Wieland's earliest attempts at tales in verse (*Comische Erzählungen*, 1765) were, as we have seen, disfigured by lapses into frivolous sensuality and cynicism; but the coarser elements gradually disappeared, and in poems like *Musarion, oder die Philosophie der Grazien* (1768)—suggested by Prior's *Alma*—and the unfinished *Idris* (1768), which is plainly inspired by Ariosto, the play of Wieland's graceful fancy had full scope. In the course of the next ten or twelve years he wrote a large number of romantic tales

Verse romances.

[1] *Zum Geburtstag* (No. 363):—

"Möge dein Lebensfaden sich spinnen, wie in der Prosa
Dein Periode, bey dem leider die Lachesis schläft."

in the light ironical tone of Ariosto. Of these, *Gandalin, oder Liebe um Liebe* (1776) and *Die Wünsche oder Pervonte* (1778) are the most ambitious; *Geron, der Adelich* is the most serious. Almost all these stories come either from Romance or, preferably, from oriental sources, the *Arabian Nights* being one of Wieland's favourite books. In 1780, the finest of all his romances in verse, *Oberon*, was published. If posterity has been slow to subscribe to Goethe's enthusiastic judgment of *Oberon*,[1] the reason is that the fantastic medievalism of Wieland's "Ritt in's alte romantische Land" has little interest for the modern reader. The adventures of Huon of Bordeaux, who, to expiate an unwitting crime, must go to Bagdad, enter the Caliph's hall, kiss the Caliph's daughter and claim her as his bride, besides carrying off four molar teeth and a handful of hair from her father's beard, cannot nowadays be taken seriously, nor do we care to know how Oberon aids Huon to accomplish his purpose, how the latter breaks his vow and brings upon himself and his bride Rezia "unspeakable sufferings." Indeed, Wieland himself does not take his story very seriously, and even in the most tragic scenes his natural gaiety does not forsake him. A stanza like the following, in which the poet's thoughts revert to his native village, will, at least, give an idea of the metrical form of the epic:—

Oberon, 1780.

> "Du kleiner Ort, wo ich das erste Licht gesogen,
> Den ersten Schmerz, die erste Lust empfand,
> Sey immerhin unscheinbar, unbekannt,
> Mein Herz bleibt ewig doch vor allen dir gewogen,
> Fühlt überall nach dir sich heimlich hingezogen,
> Fühlt selbst im Paradies sich doch aus dir verbannt;
> O möchte wenigstens mich nicht die Ahnung trügen,
> Bey meinen Vätern einst in deinem Schooss zu liegen!"[2]

Oberon contains Wieland's best poetry, and it was his last work of importance: with the possible exception of *Die Abderiten*, it is the only book of his with which the modern reader has any familiarity. Although his long life was devoted exclusively to writing, he was not one of those authors who build for posterity. The great bulk of

[1] "Sein Oberon wird so lang Poesie Poesie, Gold Gold, und Crystall Crystall bleiben wird, als ein Meisterstück poetischer Kunst geliebt und bewundert werden."—Letter to Lavater, July 3, 1780 (*Briefe*, 4, 253). *Oberon*, edited by R. Köhler, forms the ninth volume of the *Bibl. der deutschen Nationallitteratur*, Leipzig, 1868.

[2] Canto 4, stanza 22 (*Werke*, 5, 50).

his work was of his time and for his time, but, none the less, it forms a characteristic and indispensable element in German classical literature.

Wieland's influence.

Wieland had comparatively few imitators; and this was perhaps fortunate, for the writers who drew their inspiration from him did little towards improving the standard of poetry. As a direct force, he had some influence on the development of the "komische Heldengedicht," a form of the epic which Zachariä first naturalised in German literature. The *Abentheuer des frommen Helden Aeneas* (1783),[1] for instance, a travesty of Virgil in doggerel verse by J. A. Blumauer (1755-98), is in Wieland's style, while J. B. von Alxinger (1755-97)[2]—also, like Blumauer, an Austrian—followed closely in the train of *Oberon* with the heroic epics *Doolin von Maynz* (1787) and *Bliomberis* (1791). The most popular of all the comic epics of this time was *Die Jobsiade*, or, with the full title of the first edition, *Leben, Meynungen und Thaten von Hieronimus Jobs dem Kandidaten* (1784),[3] by K. A. Kortum (1745-1824), a doctor of Bochum, near Essen. The *Jobsiade* is written in the straightforward, unrefined style of the Volksbuch, and satirises, with an almost brutal lack of charity, an unfortunate theological "candidate" whose prophesied genius and success forsake him. Moritz August von Thümmel (1738-1817),[4] in his comic prose epic, the famous *Willhelmine* (1764), was almost as much indebted to the older Saxon school as to Wieland; but in his later writings the influence of Wieland predominates. Thümmel's masterpiece, however, is the *Reise in die mittäglichen Provinzen von Frankreich* (10 vols., 1791-1805), the most original of the many German imitations of Sterne's *Sentimental Journey*.

K. A. Kortum's *Jobsiade*, 1784.

M. A. von Thümmel, 1738-1817.

The novel.

The modern German novel in its earliest stages owed everything, as has been seen, to England. Gellert's *Schwedische Gräfin* was the starting-point, and, until Rousseau's *Nouvelle Héloïse* (translated 1761) suggested to Goethe the

[1] Edited by E. Grisebach, in the *Bibl. der deutschen Nationallitt.*, 35, Leipzig, 1872. Cp. F. Bobertag, in D.N.L., 141 [1886], 297 ff.

[2] Cp. D.N.L., 57 [1888], ed. H. Pröhle, 5 ff.

[3] Ed. F. Bobertag, in D.N.L., 140 [1883].

[4] Cp. *Erzählende Prosa der klassischen Periode*, ed. F. Bobertag, 1 (D.N.L., 136 [1886]), 3 ff. *Wilhelmine* has also been edited by R. Rosenbaum for the *Litteraturdenkmale*, 48, Leipzig, 1894.

plan of *Werther*, the works of Richardson, and, in a less degree, of Fielding, were the favoured models.[1] A typical novelist of the period of English imitation was J. T. Hermes (1738-1821), a North German clergyman, who wrote a *Geschichte der Miss Fanny Wilkes, so gut als aus dem Englischen übersetzt* (1766) and *Sophiens Reise von Memel nach Sachsen* (1769-73). The most readable German story of this class is the *Geschichte des Fräuleins von Sternheim* (1771), by Wieland's friend, Sophie von Laroche (1730-1807). *Fräulein von Sternheim* is written, like its English models, in letters, but it also forms a transition to the fiction of the succeeding period; by the side of sermons on morality and virtue in the manner of Richardson, passion begins to assert its rights. J. K. A. Musäus (1735-87) is now only remembered by his *Volksmährchen der Deutschen* (1782-86),[2] pleasing versions of popular fairy tales, which, however, cannot belie the fact that they were written in an unbelieving age of rationalism. He began his career as a satirist of the Richardsonian novel, and his *Grandison der Zweite* (1760-62)—later remodelled as *Der deutsche Grandison*—was, like Wieland's first novel, an imitation of *Don Quixote*. Nicolai's *Sebaldus Nothanker* (1773-76) has already been mentioned, and A. von Knigge (1752-96) was practically the last writer of eminence who took Richardson as his model. His *Roman meines Lebens* appeared in 1781-82, and was followed by several similar romances, the best of which is *Die Reise nach Braunschweig* (1792).[3] More popular than Knigge's novels was his *Über den Umgang mit Menschen* (1788), a practical treatise on the rules of social intercourse in the period before the French Revolution. The Austrian novelist, A. G. Meissner (1753-1807), author of a classical novel, *Alcibiades* (1781-88), and of a voluminous collection of anecdotes and sketches (*Skizzen*, 14 vols., 1778-96), had something of Wieland's temperament, while the Saxon, A. F. E. Langbein (1757-1835), a talented versifier, at least shared the latter's taste for witty and frivolous themes.

J. T. Hermes, 1738-1821.

S. von Laroche, 1730-1807.

J. K. A. Musäus, 1735-87.

A. von Knigge, 1752-96.

The pedagogic and humanistic ideals of the eighteenth

[1] Cp. E. Schmidt, *Richardson, Rousseau und Goethe*, Jena, 1875.

[2] Ed. M. Müller in the *Bibl. der deutschen Nationallitt.*, 3, 4, Leipzig, 1868. Cp. D.N.L., 57, 153 ff.

[3] On Knigge, cp. D.N.L., 136, 197 ff. *Über den Umgang mit Menschen* will be found in Reclam's *Univ. Bibl.*, No. 1138-40.

century, which had been first embodied in the moralising weekly journals, thus passed over into the fiction of the time. It was not, however, long before the novel sought to free itself from such utilitarian aims, and the didactic tendencies so deeply ingrained in the intellectual life of the century had to find another outlet. The heritage of the weekly journals, refused by the novelists, now fell to a class of writers known in Germany as "Popularphilosophen." Towards the end of the eighteenth century, a voluminous literature arose, which aimed at presenting the philosophic ideas and educational schemes of the time in a popular and attractive form. Such works, although outside the province of a literary history, cannot be altogether ignored; for they were often the channels by which ideas of far-reaching importance found their way into poetry. Moreover, several popular philosophers of this period assisted materially in moulding German prose.

Popular philosophical writings.

Of the older group of "Popularphilosophen," J. G. Zimmermann (1728-95)[1] unquestionably deserves the first place. Although by birth a Swiss, he spent the latter part of his life in Hanover, where he was physician to the King of England. His reputation rests upon two remarkable books, *Betrachtungen über die Einsamkeit* (1756; subsequently enlarged, 1784-85) and *Von dem Nationalstolze* (1758), which must be numbered among the most suggestive prose works of the eighteenth century. Besides a warm sympathy for the ideas of Rousseau, they show wide reading and a ripeness of judgment, which formed a marked contrast to the unbalanced enthusiasm of the "Geniezeit." As he grew old, Zimmermann became a bitter opponent of the rationalistic philosophy, and thus helped to further the interests of Romanticism. To two writers who are usually associated with Zimmermann, Thomas Abbt and Justus Möser, we shall return in the next chapter.

J. G. Zimmermann, 1728-95.

G. C. Lichtenberg (1742-99)[2] belongs to a younger generation than Zimmermann. From 1769 on, he was Professor of Physics in Göttingen and took a prominent position among the scientists of his time. But his talents were as many-sided

G. C. Lichtenberg, 1742-99.

[1] In *Fabeldichter, Satiriker und Popularphilosophen*, ed. J. Minor (D.N.L., 73 [1884]), 331 ff. Cp. R. Ischer, *J. G. Zimmermann*, Berne, 1893.

[2] Lichtenberg's *Vermischte Schriften*, 8 vols., Göttingen, 1844-46; a selection, edited by F. Bobertag, in D.N.L., 141 [1886].

as his interests. In the course of two visits to England in 1769 and 1774 (*Briefe aus England*, 1776 and 1778), he came into touch with the English scientific and literary world, and was particularly attracted by the English theatre, where Garrick's star was then in the ascendancy. As a humourist and satirist, his genius was of a high order; indeed, no writer has a better claim than he to be called the greatest satirist of modern German literature. Had he chosen, Lichtenberg might have been a German Swift, but instead, his powers were frittered away in trivial and ephemeral work, and almost the only book by which he is now remembered is a masterly commentary on Hogarth, the *Ausführliche Erklärung der Hogarthischen Kupferstiche* (1794-99).

T. G. von Hippel, 1741-96.

Hardly another minor writer of this age can boast of so lasting a popularity as T. G. von Hippel (1741-96). Personally, Hippel was one of those problematic natures in which the nineteenth century takes a more sympathetic interest than his own contemporaries could possibly have taken, and something of the contrasts and contradictions of his life and personality have passed over into his writings. *Über die Ehe* (1774), his best-known book, is a strange *apologia* for marriage by one who was himself unmarried; even his novels, of which *Lebensläufe nach aufsteigender Linie* (1778) is mainly autobiographical, are still readable at the present day.[1]

The strong pedagogic interests of the age that produced Rousseau's *Emile* (1762) were represented in Germany by J. B. Basedow (1723-90) and J. H. Pestalozzi (1746-1827) —the latter, a native of Zurich. Pestalozzi's *Lienhard und Gertrud* (1781) remains one of the classics of educational science. Popular philosophers in the stricter sense of the word were Christian Garve (1742-98), whose teaching smacks of the homely ethics of Gellert, and J. J. Engel (1741-1802), who was also the author of a popular novel, *Herr Lorenz Stark, ein Charaktergemälde* (1795).[2]

[1] Cp. D.N.L., 141, 195 ff. A modernised version of the *Lebensläufe*, by A. von Öttingen, has reached a third edition, Leipzig, 1892. *Über die Ehe*, edited by E. Brenning, in the *Bibl. der deutschen Nationallitt.*, 36, Leipzig, 1872.

[2] Cp. F. Bobertag, *Erzählende Prosa der klassischen Periode*, 1 (D.N.L., 136), 317 ff.; also in Reclam's *Univ. Bibl.*, No. 216.

CHAPTER VI.

HERDER; THE GÖTTINGEN BUND.

THE line that separates the age of Rationalism from the new movement which began in Germany as "Sturm und Drang," might be said to pass between Lessing's *Litteraturbriefe* and the *Fragmente* of Herder. Lessing, as we have already seen, is the representative writer of the "Aufklärung." With Herder, on the other hand, the new epoch opens; he is the gatekeeper of the nineteenth century. As a maker of literature, a poet, he does not, it is true, take rank beside the masters of German poetry; but as a spiritual force and intellectual innovator, he is second to none. The whole fabric of German thought and literature at the close of the eighteenth century would have been lacking in stability without the broad and solid basis afforded by his work.

Lessing and Herder.

Johann Friedrich Herder,[1] an East Prussian, was born in the village of Mohrungen on August 25, 1744. His childhood was embittered by privations, his school-life was one long tyranny. He was able, however, to attend the university, where he began by studying medicine, but soon found theology more to his taste. It is significant that the first influence under which he fell was that of Immanuel Kant, who laid in the young student's mind the foundation of the method, by means of which he revolutionised at a later date the science of history. In Königsberg he also came into immediate personal relations with J. G. Hamann (1730-88),

J. F. Herder, 1744-1803.

J. G. Hamann, 1730-88.

[1] R. Haym, *Herder nach seinem Leben und seinen Werken*, 2 vols., Berlin, 1877-85; E. Kühnemann, *Herders Leben*, Munich, 1895. The standard edition of Herder's *Sämmtliche Werke* is that edited by B. Suphan, 32 vols., Berlin, 1877 ff. A selection (10 vols.) in D.N.L., 74-78 [1885-94], ed. by H. Meyer, H. Lambel, and E. Kühnemann.

the "Magus im Norden."[1] Hamann was a strange wayward genius, who, after an aimless, penurious youth, became suddenly aware of the true meaning of the Bible, while on a visit to London in 1758. Returning to Königsberg, his native town, he began to read and study with untiring zeal. His writings—the chief of which are *Sokratische Denkwürdigkeiten* (1759), and *Kreuzzüge des Philologen* (1762)—are all fragmentary and full of strange, often startling, ideas in aphoristic form. His fervid enthusiasm, his championship of genius, his insistence on a man facing life and its tasks with his whole collective energy, and not acting by halves, made his sybilline utterances popular with the new generation of "Stürmer und Dränger." To Hamann, Herder owed his acquaintance with English literature, especially Ossian and Shakespeare, and with Hamann's aid he succeeded in obtaining a position in the "Domschule" in Riga. Here he spent five years (1764-69) of unremitting work.

Herder's *Fragmente*, 1767.

In 1767, the third year of his residence in Riga, the *Fragmente über die neuere deutsche Litteratur* were published anonymously as "Beilagen" or supplements to the *Litteraturbriefe*. Lessing's share in this latter publication had come to an end as early as 1760, but the journal continued to appear until the middle of 1765, owing mainly to the co-operation of a new writer, Thomas Abbt (1738-66), who is now only remembered as the author of two books, *Vom Tode fürs Vaterland* (1761) and *Vom Verdienste* (1765). Abbt may be regarded as the connecting-link between Lessing and Herder; it was his warm enthusiasm, rather than Lessing's cold, critical genius, that attracted Herder in the *Litteraturbriefe*. Abbt was a pioneer in the study of history on principles of organic development, a study which Herder and Justus Möser first illustrated practically. The standpoint of the *Fragmente* is not essentially different from that of the *Litteraturbriefe*, except perhaps with regard to Klopstock, whom Herder champions more warmly; but the two publications follow opposite methods. The *Litteraturbriefe* were in the first place critical; they had little to say of general theories or ideas. Herder's *Frag-*

T. Abbt, 1738-66.

[1] Cp. J. Claassen, *Hamanns Leben und Werke*, Gütersloh, 1885, and J. Minor, *J. G. Hamann in seiner Bedeutung für die Sturm- und Drangperiode*, Frankfort, 1881.

mente, on the other hand, begin with the exposition of ideas, and only criticise by the way; they are leavened with a spirit of enthusiasm, and betray in every line the personality of their author. The germs of many of Herder's chief opinions are to be found in the *Fragmente*—his ideas on language, for instance, on the relation of his own to other literatures, on the "Volkslied." His next work, *Kritische Wälder* (1769)—the title being an imitation of Quintilian's "sylvæ"—is of a more polemical nature. In the first "Wäldchen," which discusses Lessing's *Laokoon*, Herder's instinctive antagonism to his predecessor is more marked than in the *Fragmente*, while the second and third volumes are occupied with the antiquarian Klotz, who raised Lessing's ire.

Kritische Wälder, 1769.

In the summer of 1769, Herder was able to leave Riga, the provincialism of which had begun to weigh heavily upon him; he proceeded by sea to Nantes and spent nearly five months in France. The most interesting work of this period, and, in some respects, the most interesting of all that Herder wrote, is his *Journal meiner Reise im Jahre* 1769. It is a record of the most magnificent literary, æsthetic, and political dreams that ever haunted the brain of man, and through them all runs the fundamental idea of Herder's intellectual life, the conception of the human race and human culture as a product of historical evolution. Herder's writings can be described as at best only a collection of fragments, but a certain plan is behind them all; they are fragments of one great work on the evolution of mankind; to make this evolution of human history clear was the aim of Herder's life. At the end of his visit to France, he was appointed travelling-tutor to the son of the Prince-bishop of Lübeck; but this appointment came to an end hardly a year later in Strassburg, where Herder arrived with his pupil in September, 1770. Relieved of his duties, he took the opportunity of placing himself under the hands of an eye-specialist in Strassburg — he suffered from a growth in one of the lachrymal glands — before settling down as pastor in the little town of Bückeburg. The winter which he spent in Strassburg (1770-71) was of importance, for from it may be said to date the origin of the movement known as the "Sturm und Drang." During these months in Strassburg, Goethe sat at Herder's feet and learned the new

Herder's journey to France, 1769.

In Strassburg, 1770-71.

faith from his lips. Herder opened the young poet's eyes to the greatness of Shakespeare, revealed to him the treasures of national poetry in the songs of the people, and endowed the traceries of the Gothic cathedral above their heads with a new meaning and a new gospel. In this momentous period and the few years that immediately followed, Herder was a force of the first magnitude in German literature, a force that it is impossible to overestimate. Of his writings at this time the most important were a prize essay, *Über den Ursprung der Sprache* (1772), and his contributions to *Von deutscher Art und Kunst* (1773).[1] The latter work, in which Goethe and Möser also had a share, may be regarded as the manifesto of the German "Sturm und Drang."

Von deutscher Art und Kunst, 1773.

J. Möser, 1720-94.

Justus Möser (1720-94), a native of Westphalia, who spent a considerable part of his life in London, was another pioneer of the coming time; his *Osnabrückische Geschichte*, which began to appear in 1765, was the earliest historical work written from the modern standpoint of organic development. He stimulated even in a higher degree than Klopstock the interest of the German people in their own past; he realised what Abbt had not lived to complete. Möser's *Patriotische Phantasien* (1774)[2] were richer in ideas for the political well-being and progress of the nation than any other book of this eventful time.

Volkslieder, 1778-79.

In 1778 and 1779, Herder published a collection of popular songs and ballads of many nations, entitled *Volkslieder*.[3] This work opened the eyes of the German people to the poetic worth of the Volkslied; and it was, at the same time, characteristic of the new standpoint which Herder held with regard to criticism. While a critic of the older generation, like Lessing, set, for instance, less value on a popular ballad than on an epigram, Herder gave the Volkslied its true place in literary history. In the songs which he took over from foreign literatures, he proved himself an admirable translator, but he lacked the creative faculty of the poet; his original poems, his lyric dramas, of which *Brutus* (1774) was written in these years, are reminiscent of Klopstock. Of the prose

[1] *Werke*, 5. A convenient reprint of *Von deutscher Art und Kunst*, ed. H. Lambel, in the *Litteraturdenkmale*, 40, 41, Stuttgart, 1892.

[2] Ed. R. Zöllner, in the *Bibl. der deutschen Nationallitt.*, 32, 33, Leipzig, 1871.

[3] *Werke*, 25; the title *Stimmen der Völker* was given to the collection by J. von Müller, the first editor of Herder's works.

writings of this period, the most noteworthy is a book which appeared in 1774, under the title *Auch eine Philosophie der Geschichte zur Bildung der Menschheit.* A better example could hardly be found of the peculiarly germinating qualities of Herder's thought—and no thinker of the eighteenth century scattered so many suggestive ideas abroad as he—than this little book. Many of the ideas here set forth reappear in the literature and philosophy of the Romantic movement in the following generation. To 1774 belongs also the first part of the *Älteste Urkunde des Menschengeschlechts*, a work, however, which is too immediately a product of the "Sturm und Drang" to have had permanent worth. Herder's theological writings, such as the *Provinzialblätter an Prediger* (1774) and the *Briefe, das Studium der Theologie betreffend* (1780-81), carry into the field of religion the passionate battle which, in literature, he waged against the spirit of the "Aufklärung." In 1776, he accepted an invitation to Weimar as general superintendent or chief pastor. This welcome release from Bückeburg he owed to his old pupil Goethe. And in Weimar he wrote his most important book, *Ideen zur Philosophie der Geschichte der Menschheit*, which was published in four parts between 1784 and 1791.[1] This is, at least, an approach to the comprehensive treatise which Herder always dreamed of writing; it contains the fullest statement of his views on the subject of historical evolution. But the importance of the *Ideen* extends beyond the individual writer; the work forms, we might even say, an intellectual bridge between the two centuries. Herder's conception of the history of humanity was, on the one hand, like that of Lessing, of Rousseau, and of all the leading thinkers of the eighteenth century, a pedagogic one; he conceived the human race as undergoing a process of education towards an ideal humanism. But he went a step further; he regarded this educative process from the standpoint of historical evolution, and herein lies his claim to be regarded as one of the founders of modern historical science.

Call to Weimar.

Ideen zur Philosophie der Geschichte, 1784-91.

Before the publication of the *Ideen*, perhaps even before he received the call to Weimar, Herder had ceased to be an active power in the world of letters; certainly from about

[1] *Werke*, 13, 14; a convenient edition by J. Schmidt in *Bibl. der deutschen Nationallitt.*, 23-25, Leipzig, 1869, and in D.N.L., 77 (3 vols.)

1780 on, he fell rapidly behind the intellectual movement. His later philosophical writings are filled with a petty spirit of antagonism towards his first teacher, Kant, for whose development he had neither understanding nor sympathy; even his relations with Goethe and Schiller were strained for a time. But in the last year or two of his life—he died in Weimar on the 18th of December, 1803—he asserted himself once more with a work of genuine poetry, a translation of the Spanish "Volkslieder" which centre in the Cid Campeador. *Der Cid: nach Spanischen Romanzen besungen* (1805)[1] is Herder's finest poetic achievement and one of the abiding treasures of German ballad literature.

Antagonism to Kant.

Der Cid, 1805.

Before passing on to consider the movement which is most immediately associated with Herder's work, the "Sturm und Drang," we must first turn to a group of writers who stood somewhat apart from the main stream, namely, the members of the "Göttinger Hain" or "Bund." The word "Hain" at once suggests an affinity with the "bards" who looked up to Klopstock as their master,[2] and it is, indeed, as a development of the school of Klopstock that the Göttingen poets are to be regarded

The "Göttinger Dichterbund."

The "Göttinger Hain" was founded in 1772, but the *Göttinger Musenalmanach*, which ultimately became the organ of the "Hain," had begun to appear nearly three years earlier. A French *Almanac des Muses*, which had been published annually since 1765, served as model for the first *Göttinger Musenalmanach für das Jahr* 1770,[3] and its founders, H. C. Boie (1744-1806) and F. W. Gotter (1746-97),[4] had undoubtedly something similar in view. Gotter, in particular, had pronounced Gallic tastes, and his dramas are, for the most part, adaptations from the French. His connection with the *Almanach* did not, however, last long; in 1775, Voss edited it, then, for three years, Göckingk, who in turn gave place to Bürger. With this publication virtually begins a new

H. C. Boie, 1744-1806, F. W. Gotter, 1746 97.

[1] Ed. J. Schmidt in *Bibl. der deutschen Nationallitt.*, 15, Leipzig, 1868; in D.N.L., 75.

[2] Cp. Klopstock's ode, *Der Hügel und der Hain* (*Werke*, ed. R. Hamel, 3, 140).

[3] Reprints of the *Göttinger Almanach* from 1770 to 1772, edited by C. Redlich, will be found in the *Litteraturdenkmale*, No. 49 f., 52 f., 64 f., Stuttgart, 1894-97.

[4] Cp. K. Weinhold, *H. C. Boie*, Halle, 1868, and R. Schlösser, *F. W. Gotter*, Hamburg, 1895.

chapter in the history of the German lyric; the first *Göttinger Almanach* was the forerunner of many others, which, until well into the next century, formed the favourite receptacle for original poetry. The consecration of the "Göttinger Bund," which originated in the meetings of several gifted young students, to whom Boie acted as mentor, took place on the 12th of September, 1772. Voss, Hölty, the brothers Miller, and two others, had gone out in the evening to a village in the neighbourhood of Göttingen, probably Weende.

"Der Abend war ausserordentlich heiter," wrote Voss to a friend, "und der Mond voll. Wir überliessen uns ganz den Empfindungen der schönen Natur. Wir assen in einer Bauerhütte eine Milch, und begaben uns darauf ins freie Feld. Hier fanden wir einen kleinen Eichengrund, und sogleich fiel uns allen ein; den Bund der Freundschaft unter diesen heiligen Bäumen zu schwören. Wir umkränzten die Hüte mit Eichenlaub, legten sie unter den Baum, fassten uns alle bei den Händen, tanzten so um den eingeschlossenen Stamm herum,—riefen den Mond und die Sterne zu Zeugen unseres Bundes an, und versprachen uns eine ewige Freundschaft." [1]

J. H. Voss, 1751-1826.

Johann Heinrich Voss (1751-1826)[2] was not the most inspired of this little group, but he was the representative poet and the chief of the "Bund." After a youth of extreme privation—he was a native of Mecklenburg—he attracted Boie's attention by some verses sent to the *Almanach*, and the latter made it possible for him to study at the University of Göttingen. Here Voss devoted himself zealously to classical philology and to poetry. In 1776, he retired to Wandsbeck, where he lived a couple of years on the scanty income brought in by literary work. From 1782 to 1802, he was a schoolmaster in Eutin; in 1802, we find him in Jena, and in 1805, he was appointed professor in Heidelberg, where he died in 1826. Voss's literary work does not cover a wide range, and the bulk of it rarely rises above a certain homely mediocrity. Voss had, in fact, too much commonsense to be a great poet; he never lost touch with the prosaic realities of daily life. In later years, this essentially unpoetic side of his nature, combined with a boorishness of manner which he never lost, brought him into dis-

[1] *Briefe von J. H. Voss*, edited by A. Voss, Leipzig, 1840, 1, 91 f.
[2] *Der Göttinger Dichterbund*, herausg. von A. Sauer, 1 (D.N.L., 49 [1887]). Cp. W. Herbst, *J. H. Voss*, 2 vols., Leipzig, 1872-76.

agreeable conflict with the younger Heidelberg Romanticists. Apart from his leadership of the "Göttinger Dichterbund," Voss owes his place in German literature to his translations from the Greek and Latin, and to his *Idylls*—above all, to the finest of them, *Luise*, which served Goethe as a model for *Hermann und Dorothea*.

Voss's *Homer*, 1781-93.

The version of *Homers Odüssee*, which Voss published in 1781,[1] is one of the masterpieces of German translation; although unequal, and occasionally disfigured by harsh and un-German constructions, it remains, in essentials, the most perfect rendering of Homer into a modern tongue. It is, indeed, surprising that this Mecklenburg peasant, with his homely ideas of poetry and life, should have been able to convey, not merely the meaning, but the spirit, the primitive harmony and almost the music, of the Homeric epic in his translation. In Voss's translation, Homer became almost as complete a possession of the German people as Shakespeare in that of Schlegel. The version of the *Iliad* did not appear for twelve years after that of the *Odyssey* (1793), and, owing to the translator's striving after philological accuracy, is deficient in the freshness that characterised the latter. The same fault disfigures more or less all Voss's later classic translations, as well as the second edition of the *Odyssey* (1793). His final work was a version of Shakespeare, in which he was assisted by his sons (9 vols., 1818-39).

His *Idyllen*.

When we turn to Voss's *Idyllen*[2] (first collected edition in the *Gedichte*, 1785), it is difficult to realise that little over twenty years had elapsed since Gessner's last volume of *Neue Idyllen* found admiring readers. Between the sentimental and artificial shepherds and shepherdesses of Gessner and the intensely realistic figures of Voss, at least a century would seem to have intervened. In the idylls of the two poets, it is not the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries which touch, but the seventeenth and nineteenth. In less than a generation, the word "Idyll" had undergone a complete change of meaning; a new spirit was abroad, a spirit that sought to base literature once more upon the realities of life, and, instead of the conventional figures of the Renaissance pastoral, Voss, whose

[1] Cp. the edition by M. Bernays, Stuttgart, 1881.
[2] Edited by K. Goedeke (*Bibl. der deutschen Nationallitt.*, 26), Leipzig, 1869.

model was the *Idylls* of Theocritus, gives us villagers, country schoolmasters, and pastors. The homely world of the German social novel is here embellished by a poetry that is hardly less homely. *Luise, ein ländliches Gedicht in drey Idyllen* (1784), is Voss's most popular work. The subject of the poem is the courtship and wedding of Luise and a young pastor, but this forms only the thread which holds the various scenes together. These scenes are painted with both truth and humour, and give a faithful picture of life in a country parsonage, at a time when rationalism was still a dominant force in religious thought. But one misses here, as in all Voss's writings, poetic tact; his striving after realistic simplicity and his love of detail often lead him into absurdities, and even his humour is not always in good taste. None the less, by associating the idyll with the Greek epic, he became the creator of a new *genre* in German poetry; as Schiller said,[1] he not only enriched the literature, but also widened it. His other idylls have been unduly overshadowed by *Luise*, but one, at least, *Der siebzigste Geburtstag*, which appeared in the *Almanach* for 1781, is worthy of a place beside it.

Luise, 1784.

The most gifted lyric poet of the Göttingen circle was undoubtedly Ludwig H. C. Hölty (1748-76),[2] whose unhappy life was cut short by consumption at the age of twenty-eight. In the simple elegiac songs and odes which Hölty wrote after his association with the Bund (*Gedichte*, first collected, 1782-83), there is lyric inspiration of the highest order. But it is poetry which suggests a comparison with Uz rather than with Goethe. In verses, such as the following, from the poem *Lebenspflichten* (1776):—

L. H. C. Hölty, 1748-76.

"Rosen auf den Weg gestreut,
Und des Harms vergessen!
Eine kleine Spanne Zeit
Ward uns zugemessen.

Heute hüpft im Frühlingstanz
Noch der frohe Knabe;
Morgen webt der Todtenkranz
Schon auf seinem Grabe,"[3]

---

[1] *Über naive und sentimentalische Dichtung* (*Werke*, 10), 489.

[2] Cp. A. Sauer, *l.c.*, 2 (D.N.L., 50, 1 [1894]). Hölty's *Gedichte* have also been edited by K. Halm (*Bibl. der deutschen Nationallitt.*, 29), Leipzig, 1870.

[3] A. Sauer's edition, 2, 112.

an unmistakable echo is to be heard of the classic Anacreontic. At the same time, Hölty obviously belonged to a generation which stood on a more intimate footing with nature than did the Halle school. His lyrics were not always as polished as Uz's, but the tragic melancholy that pervades them was, at least, sincere.

J. M. Miller, 1750-1814.

Only one other member of the little group of poets who danced round the oak-tree in September, 1772, has a claim upon our attention here—namely, the Swabian, J. M. Miller (1750-1814),[1] who had come to Göttingen to study theology. Many of the songs which Miller contributed to the Almanachs—his *Gedichte* did not appear in a collected edition until 1783—became veritable Volkslieder, but he is now best remembered as the author of *Siegwart*, a characteristic novel of the "Sturm und Drang," to which we shall return. In December, 1772, three months after the founding of the "Hain," two new members, the brothers Christian and Friedrich Leopold, Grafen zu Stolberg (1748-1821 and 1750-1819),[2] joined the circle, and infused new life into it by bringing it into closer relations with Klopstock. Neither had much genius, but, caught up and carried along by the revolutionary spirit of the time, they wrote rhetorical odes against tyrants, and sang pæons in honour of their fatherland. A volume of *Gedichte* by both brothers appeared in 1779. Their talents, however, show to most advantage in their translations from the Greek. Amongst other things, Christian made a German version of *Sofokles* (1787), while Friedrich, whose literary work is the more voluminous and important, translated the *Ilias* (1778), *Auserlesene Gespräche des Platon* (1796-97), and—as late as 1806—*Die Gedichte von Ossian.*

C. zu Stolberg, 1748-1821. F. L. zu Stolberg, 1750-1819.

Besides these poets of the Göttingen "Hain," a few other writers have to be considered, who, although not actually members of the Bund, belonged to the same group; they are Claudius, Göckingk, and, most famous of all, Bürger. Matthias Claudius (1740-1815), a native of Holstein, was the oldest of the three; simple, unassuming, and pious, he is an excellent example of the literary man as produced by the homely provincialism of German life in the eighteenth century.

M. Claudius, 1740-1815.

[1] Cp. A. Sauer, *l.c.*, 2 (D.N.L., 50, 1 [1894]), 117 ff.
[2] Cp. A. Sauer, *l.c.*, 3 (D.N.L., 50, 2 [1896]), 1 ff.

For more than four years, under the pseudonym "Asmus," Claudius edited *Der Wandsbecker Bothe* (1771-75), and, in the literary criticism which he contributed to it, revealed a good, if somewhat unimaginative, common-sense, tempered always by a genial humour; he was fond of posing as the champion of the people against both philosopher and scholar. The "Wandsbeck Messenger," as he called himself after his paper, is one of the lovable personalities of German literature. He was not an inspired poet, but he contributed to the store of German "Volkslieder" a number of hearty, popular songs, such as the *Rheinweinlied* ("Bekränzt mit Laub den lieben vollen Becher"), and the familiar *Abendlied*:—

"Der Mond ist aufgegangen,
Die goldnen Sternlein prangen
Am Himmel hell und klar;
Der Wald steht schwarz und schweiget,
Und aus den Wiesen steiget
Der weisse Nebel wunderbar."[1]

His writings—embracing, besides poems, a miscellaneous collection of sketches and anecdotes—were published under the fantastic title, *Asmus omnia sua secum portans, oder Sämmtliche Werke des Wandsbecker Bothen* (1775, 1790-1812).[2]

L. F. G. von Göckingk, 1748-1828.

The intimate personal relation in which Leopold F. G. von Göckingk (1748-1828)[3] stood to the Göttingen circle has made it difficult to measure his poetry by the proper standard. As a matter of fact, his verses ought rather to be compared with those of Wieland and the older Anacreontic rhymers, to whom he is in many respects akin, than with the poetry of his friends in Göttingen; on the other hand, he is in closer touch with life and reality than the generation which had not come under Klopstock's influence. Göckingk's reputation rests on his *Lieder zweier Liebenden* (1777) and his *Episteln* (first collected in the *Gedichte*, 1780-82). The passionate earnestness of the new literature is not to be found in these poems, but they show a remarkable command of verse and a clever satirical talent. It may at least be said of Göckingk that no other German writer has handled the "Epistle," as a literary form, so dexterously as he.

[1] A. Sauer's edition, 284 f., 293 f.
[2] Edited by C. Redlich, 12th ed., Gotha, 1882. Cp. W. Herbst, *M. Claudius*, Gotha, 1878, and A. Sauer, *l.c.*, 3, 193 ff.
[3] A selection of his poetry, edited by J. Minor, in D.N.L., 73 [1884], 115 ff.

Bürger's *Lenore*, 1773.

The *Göttinger Musenalmanach* for 1774, which was published in the previous autumn, contained a poem which has exerted a more widespread influence than any other short poem in the literature of the world. This was the ballad of *Lenore* which had been suggested to G. A. Bürger by a Low German Volkslied, similar to the Scottish ballad of *Sweet William's Ghost* in Percy's *Reliques*. The background of the ballad is the Seven Years' War; Wilhelm, Lenore's lover, has fallen in the battle of Prague, and she, despairing of his return, rebels against God's Providence. In the night, a ghostly rider comes to her in the guise of her lover and bids her mount behind him.

"Und als sie sassen, hop! hop! hop!
Ging's fort im sausenden Galopp,
Dass Ross und Reiter schnoben,
Und Kies und Funken stoben. . . .

Wie flogen rechts, wie flogen links
Die Hügel, Bäum' und Hecken!
Wie flogen links, und rechts, und links,
Die Dörfer, Städt' und Flecken!
Graut Liebchen auch?—Der Mond scheint hell!
Hurrah! die Todten reiten schnell!—
Graut Liebchen auch vor Todten?—
Ach! lass sie ruhn, die Todten?"[1]—

When the goal of the wild ride is reached, Lenore's companion discloses himself as Death in person—a skeleton with hook and hour-glass. The spirits, dancing in the moonlight, point the moral:—

"Geduld! Geduld! Wenn's Herz auch bricht!
Mit Gott im Himmel hadre nicht!"

Like wildfire, this wonderful ballad swept across Europe, from Scotland to Poland and Russia, from Scandinavia to Italy. The eerie tramp of the ghostly horse which carries Lenore to her doom re-echoed in every literature, and to many a young sensitive soul was the poetic revelation of a new world. No production of the German "Sturm und Drang"—not even Goethe's *Werther*, which appeared a few months later—was more stimulating in its effects on other literatures than Bürger's *Lenore;* this ballad did more than

[1] A. Sauer's edition, 175 ff.; the text of the lines quoted is, however, that of the *Almanach*, 221 ff.

any other single work towards calling the Romantic movement to life in Europe.[1]

G. A. Bürger, 1747-94.

Gottfried August Bürger was born on the last night of the year 1747, at Molmerswende, near Halberstadt, and died at Göttingen in 1794. His biography describes one of those unbalanced, unhappy lives which, from this time on, become so frequent in German annals: his passionate temperament ill adapted him for the quiet regular life which circumstances demanded of him. His first serious mistake was his marriage, in 1774, to a lady with whose sister—the "Molly" of his songs—he was already passionately in love. For a time, indeed, he carried on a kind of double marriage with both sisters in the unrestrained manner of the "Geniezeit." His wife died in 1784, and with an exultation which found expression four years later in *Das hohe Lied von der Einzigen*, he greeted the possibility of being able to marry Molly. But his happiness was short-lived; within a few months Molly, too, died. Some years later, he married again, but his third marriage was even a more miserable one than the first, and in two years ended in a divorce. Apart from these domestic miseries, Bürger was condemned to a life of poverty, first as an official in a small village, then as an unsalaried teacher in the University of Göttingen; and for a man of his nature, straitened circumstances were not compatible with happiness. Of his other ballads, *Die Weiber von Weinsberg* (1775), *Lenardo und Blandine* (1776), *Das Lied vom braven Mann* (1777), are good examples of his powers; after *Lenore*, however, *Der wilde Jäger* (1778) unquestionably takes first place. Herder had pointed out the rich spring of ballad poetry in Bishop Percy's *Reliques*, and Bürger, by following in Herder's footsteps, created the German Romantic ballad. His best poems are either direct translations from the English, or—like *Lenore* itself—imitations of the Percy Ballads. To this group belong, *Der Bruder Graurock und die Pilgerin* (1777), *Des Pfarrers Tochter von Taubenheim* (1781), and *Der Kaiser und der Abt* (1784). The love-songs to Molly and *Das Blümchen Wunderhold* reveal another side of Burger's poetic genius, while his sonnets

Other ballads.

[1] Cp. E. Schmidt, *Charakteristiken*, Berlin, 1886, 199 ff.; editions of Bürger's *Gedichte*, by A. Sauer (D.N.L., 78 [183.4]) and E. Grisebach, 2 vols., Berlin, 1889. The most recent work on Bürger is by W. von Wurzbach, Leipzig, 1900.

and other experiments in the metrical forms of Romance literatures had a direct influence on the poetry of the Romantic School: A. W. Schlegel was proud to claim that, as a student in Göttingen, he had sat at Bürger's feet. Bürger, it may also be mentioned, translated from the English the *Wunderbaren Reisen zu Wasser und Lande des Freyherrn von Münchhausen* (1786), the famous "Volksbuch," which R. E. Raspe had published in England a year earlier.

There is perhaps more truth in the severe criticism of Bürger, which Schiller wrote in 1791,[1] than the critic's pointedly moral attitude towards the poet's weaknesses makes us willing to admit. The lack of balance, the defective moral principle in Bürger's life, sapped to a large extent the vitality of his poetry. Standing as he did, on the threshold of Romanticism, his career might have been a warning to his successors: he was an example of a principle, which was deeply engrained in all the Romantic writers, namely, that a man's poetry must be at one with his life, and that great poetry can only be the expression of a great life.

[1] *Sämmtliche Schriften*, ed. K. Goedeke, 6, 314 ff.

CHAPTER VII.

"STURM UND DRANG"; GOETHE'S YOUTH.

"Sturm und Drang."

THE phenomenon known as "Sturm und Drang" is by no means restricted to the literature of Germany. There is a period of "Sturm und Drang" in all literatures, as there is, to a greater or less degree, in the life of every individual. There was a "Sturm und Drang" in Italy and France when the light of the Renaissance first broke on these countries; there was a "Sturm und Drang" behind the "mighty line" of Marlowe and his contemporaries, in the French literary movement of 1830, and in German literature at the close of the nineteenth century; while, turning to single works, this spirit is as evident in *Titus Andronicus* or *Childe Harold* as in *Werther* or *Die Räuber*. "Sturm und Drang" is only another expression for youthful vigour. But it would be impossible, in English, French, or Italian literature, to point to a movement of this character so widespread and universal as the "Sturm und Drang" in German literature at the dawn of the classical epoch. The "Geniezeit"—the phrase "Sturm und Drang" was not employed until a later date—was in truth a period of genius: not only were its leaders—Herder, Goethe, Schiller—men of unquestionable eminence, but even the minor writers of the time were poets to whose gifts the word genius is more applicable than talent. Genius, however, was only one factor in the German "Sturm und Drang"; a second was the work of Jean Jacques Rousseau (1712-78), whose ideas gave the movement its peculiar character and tendency. Perhaps in no age has the thought of one man affected a literature so powerfully and universally as did that of Rousseau at this time; not even the discovery of classical antiquity at the Renaissance, or the re-birth

of individualism in our own time, can be compared with the enthusiasm for Rousseau which found voice in the "Sturm und Drang."

The "Geniezeit" practically begins with the publication of Herder's *Fragmente*, in 1767, and closes with the appearance of *Don Carlos*, in 1787; but these are its utmost limits. It is perhaps best conceived under the figure of an ellipse, the two poles of which are formed by *Götz von Berlichingen* (1773) and *Die Räuber* (1781). Goethe, above all, gave the movement its stamp; his magnificent personality dominated it completely and made it an epoch in the literary evolution of Europe.

J. W. von Goethe, 1749-1832.

Johann Wolfgang Goethe[1] was born in Frankfort-on-the-Main on the 28th of August, 1749. His father, Johann Caspar Goethe, since 1742 "kaiserlicher Rat," had received a good education as a jurist, and had visited Italy, from which he brought back tastes that influenced his whole life. But he was stern, pedantic, and inaccessible, and little real sympathy existed between him and his children. Of these, Wolfgang was the eldest, and only one other child, Cornelie, survived the age of childhood. The poet's mother, Katharina Elisabeth Textor, who was herself but seventeen when he was born, and of a bright, happy nature, was the real companion of his early years; from her he inherited the better part of his poetic genius. No childhood could have been sunnier than that which young Goethe passed in the patrician house in the "Grosse Hirschgraben," with its huge stairs, roomy attics, and quiet corners, its view over the gardens of the town. The boy's literary instincts were first awakened by the stories of the Old Testament, and his imagination was stimulated by the pomp of a "Kaiserkrönung" in the Frankfort "Römer," or town-hall. A marionette theatre and the performances of French players turned his interests in the direction of the drama. During the French occupation of Frankfort, in 1759, Count Thoranc, the "Königslieutenant," was quartered upon

Childhood.

[1] Of recent biographies of Goethe the best are by R. M. Meyer, 3 vols., 2nd ed., Berlin, 1899, and A. Bielschowsky, 1, 2nd ed., Munich, 1900. The standard edition of the poet's works is that published under the auspices of the Weimar Court (Weimar, 1887, ff.); of this edition, 57 vols., besides 35 of Letters and Diaries, have appeared (1901). A critical edition by K. Heinemann is also in course of publication, Leipzig, 1901 ff. In D.N.L., Goethe's works, edited by H. Düntzer, K. J. Schröer, R. Steiner, G. Witkowski, embrace vols. 82-117 [1882-97].

Goethe's father: the Count was a man of artistic tastes, and, to Wolfgang's delight, gathered round him the artists of the town, bringing life and stir into the old house. To the enthusiasm which the early cantos of the *Messias* awakened in the boy, and partly also to the pietism of a distant relative of his mother's, Susanna von Klettenberg—the "schöne Seele" of *Wilhelm Meister*—we owe the earliest poem which was included in Goethe's works, *Poetische Gedanken über die Höllenfahrt Christi* (1763).

In 1764, the first romantic episode in the young poet's life occurred, an episode which is surrounded with perhaps too bright a halo of poetry in *Dichtung und Wahrheit*. But the Frankfort Gretchen, the heroine of this romance, regarded Wolfgang merely as a boy and not as a lover; an illness brought the affair to a conclusion, and, as soon as he recovered, his father sent him to the university. In October, 1765, Goethe matriculated at the University of Leipzig. Leipzig, as he found it, was not very different from what it had been nineteen years earlier when Lessing came to study there; it had become, if anything, more metropolitan, and made even the son of a leading Frankfort citizen seem provincial in dress and speech. In the literary world Gellert was still the chief star, and he had a certain influence on Goethe's prose style in these years. Gottsched, on the other hand, had sunk considerably lower in popular estimation than in Lessing's time. To Goethe, as to Lessing, the theatre and not the university was the chief source of attraction, and it was not long before he, too, was busy with dramatic plans.

Goethe in Leipzig, 1765-68.

The "Schäferspiel" *Die Laune des Verliebten*, written in 1767 and 1768, is a reflection of Goethe's relations to Anna Katharina Schönkopf, daughter of a Leipzig wine-merchant. It is a slight play in one act, which shows how, by a friend's intervention, a jealous lover is cured of his jealousy: it is written in tripping Alexandrines, and is at least as good as the pastoral plays of the Saxon school. More interesting than *Die Laune des Verliebten* is a small MS. volume of lyrics inspired by Käthchen Schönkopf, which was discovered and published as recently as 1896.[1] These poems are essentially juvenile — the collection bears the title *Annette* — and give little

Die Laune des Verliebten, 1768.

Annette.

[1] *Werke* (Weimar edition), 37, 11 ff.

promise of the future master. But before Goethe left Leipzig he had taken the first step towards publicity by publishing a volume of *Neue Lieder* (1769), which had been written mainly in 1768 and 1769. In these songs his hand has become surer, his touch finer; but the gallantry of the "klein Paris" is still uppermost, the poet's real feelings are still veiled in polite insincerities.

Neue Lieder, 1769.

Die Mitschuldigen, 1769.

The second of Goethe's dramas, *Die Mitschuldigen*, although it did not receive its present form until his return to Frankfort in 1769, belongs also to the Leipzig period. It is a more ambitious play than its predecessor, but, like it, does not venture beyond the domain of the Saxon comedy. Suggestions from Molière, the half-frivolous, half-moralising tone of Wieland, together with the young poet's own experience of the problematic side of life, formed his materials; but he has not succeeded in combining these varied elements in a harmonious and convincing whole.

The most characteristic of Goethe's writings during his life in Leipzig were his letters to his friends:[1] here we find best exemplified the poet's clearness and intuition, his power of calling up a picture with a few strokes of the pen, and of giving life to ideas. But the strain of the last months of his life in Leipzig had been too much for him: the excitement and dissipation of student-life, in which he endeavoured to stifle his sorrows, ended with the bursting of a blood-vessel in the lungs, and he lay long ill at home.

Return to Frankfort.

As he gradually recovered, Frankfort, compared with the free, stimulating life of Leipzig, seemed oppressive in its provincialism: he sought consolation in literature for the friends he had left behind him — in Lessing, Shakespeare, and Rousseau. The pietism that had influenced him before he left home now returned with redoubled force; his letters became religious in tone, and he devoted himself to magic and alchemy. His father proposed that he should complete his studies, not in Leipzig, but in Strassburg, and on the 2nd of April, 1770, he arrived in the Alsatian capital,

[1] Although now superseded by the Weimar edition, the collection of Goethe's early writings and letters published by M. Bernays, under the title *Der junge Goethe* (3 vols., Leipzig, 1875), is still valuable for the survey it affords of the poet's life and work between 1764 and 1776. Cp. also W. Scherer, *Aus Goethes Frühzeit* (*Quellen und Forschungen*, 34), Strassburg 1879, and R. Weissenfels, *Goethe im Sturm und Drang*, 1, Halle, 1894.

the university of which, French rule notwithstanding, was essentially German.

In Strassburg, Goethe discovered his genius; under the shadow of the Strassburg Minster, he became a poet. It was his good fortune to make congenial acquaintances at once; at the table at which he dined he found an interesting company, presided over by an actuary, Salzmann. To this circle belonged J. H. Jung-Stilling (1740-1817), an older student, who, after a youth of the severest privations, had ultimately been able to realise the wish of his heart and study medicine. His autobiography, of which the first part was published by Goethe in 1777, under the title *Heinrich Stillings Jugend*,[1] was accepted as a veritable "Volksbuch," and is still interesting for the remarkable tone of pietistic resignation which pervades it. Goethe's studies in Strassburg ranged from law, which he was obliged to study, to anatomy, from alchemy to poetry. But in the autumn of his first year, he made a new acquaintance who was to mean more to him than any other of this eventful time. Herder—the Herder whose *Fragmente* had found a passionate response in so many young hearts—arrived in Strassburg, and Goethe fell completely under his spell. Herder brought clearness and order into the young poet's thoughts and studies; he taught him his own stimulating ideas of historical evolution, opened his eyes to the beauties of Gothic architecture and to the greatness of Shakespeare; he revealed to him the heart of the people in its songs.

Goethe in Strassburg, 1770-71.

J. H. Jung-Stilling, 1740-1817.

Herder.

Close upon this friendship followed another important event in Goethe's life, his love for Friederike Brion, daughter of the pastor in Sesenheim, an Alsatian village about twenty miles to the north of Strassburg. As described in *Dichtung und Wahrheit*, there is no more charming idyll in the history of modern literature; and the lyrics to Friederike are proof enough that, in his autobiography, Goethe did not unduly veil the truth in poetry. The songs which this country girl inspired, placed Goethe in the front rank of lyric poets; since Walther von der Vogelweide, no notes so deep and pure had been struck in German poetry. In his Sesenheim *Lieder* Goethe first completely freed the lyric from

Friederike Brion.

The Sesenheim lyrics.

[1] Cp. F. Bobertag, *Erzählende Prosa der klassischen Periode*, 2 (D.N.L., 137 [1886]), 3 ff.

the formalism of the Renaissance. Verses like the following (*Mit einem gemahlten Band*) mark an epoch in the history of modern poetry:—

"Sieht mit Rosen sich umgeben
Sie, wie eine Rose jung.
Einen Kuss! geliebtes Leben,
Und ich bin belohnt genung.

Mädchen das wie ich empfindet,
Reich mir deine liebe Hand.
Und das Band, das uns verbindet,
Sey kein schwaches Rosenband."[1]

To the Sesenheim idyll, the only issue possible was a tragic one, and before many months were over, Goethe felt that the inevitable separation had to come. The gulf that lay between the son of a leading Frankfort citizen and the simple villager, who even lost some of her charm for him against the background of Strassburg's streets, was too wide ever to be bridged. The separation broke Friederike's heart and plunged Goethe in despair; it sent him wandering through storm and rain in restless agony, a mood that is reflected in his *Wandrers Sturmlied*. But his sorrow taught him to see deep enough into the human heart to paint a Marie, a Gretchen, a Werther, and it was now that the great figures of Götz and Faust took possession of him. In August, 1771, seventeen months after his arrival, Goethe left Strassburg as "licentiate of law," a degree which allowed him to use the title "Doctor."

On his return to Frankfort began his initiation into the business of an advocate, but he also found time for social intercourse and gaiety. Among his many friends, J. H. Merck, in Darmstadt (1741-91), seems to have had most authority over him at this time. A man of ripe practical sense, Merck was always ready, after the manner of a Mephistopheles or a Carlos, to keep the enthusiasm of the young poet in check and to lead him back to the path of prudence. In May, 1772, Goethe went for four months to Wetzlar, the seat of the Imperial Law Courts, in order to learn the routine of his profession. Here he soon made a new circle of friends, of whom the chief were F. W. Gotter and J. C. Kestner: here, too, he once more fell in love,

Goethe in Wetzlar, 1772.

[1] *Werke*, 1, 74 (but cp. 1, 386).

and his passion for Charlotte Buff left furrows on his soul almost as deep as those he had received in Sesenheim, the conflict being further complicated by the fact that Charlotte was already betrothed to his friend Kestner. But, although Goethe was brought to the verge of suicide, he remained faithful to his friend and Charlotte to her betrothed. A journey up the Rhine and a visit to Frau Sophie von Laroche helped to obliterate his grief, and, once in Frankfort again, he devoted himself zealously to literary work. His critical contributions to the *Frankfurter Gelehrten Anzeigen* (1772-73),[1] in which the signal for the literary revolution was first clearly sounded, and the glowing panegyric on the builder of the Strassburg Minster, Erwin von Steinbach, which appeared in November, 1772, under the title *Von deutscher Baukunst*, were the immediate results of Herder's teaching. But Goethe's great achievement, the work which made him the chief poet of Germany and the leader of the "Sturm und Drang," was *Götz von Berlichingen.*

Von deutscher Baukunst, 1772.

In its first form, *Geschichte Gottfriedens von Berlichingen mit der eisernen Hand, dramatisirt* (not published until 1832), was written in the autumn of 1771; in 1773, however, Goethe completely revised it and gave it a more compact dramatic form, in other words made a play out of what had only been a dramatised chronicle. And in this form under the title *Götz von Berlichingen mit der eisernen Hand: ein Schauspiel*, it appeared in 1773.[2] Based upon the hero's own *Lebens-Beschreibung*, which was written about the middle of the sixteenth century, and printed at Nürnberg in 1731, Goethe's *Götz von Berlichingen* is a historical drama of the Reformation period, but a drama appealing immediately to the poet's own contemporaries. The rough knight with the hand of iron, enemy of prince and priest alike, but friend of the oppressed, the champion of freedom, was an ideal that went straight to the heart of the time, and the young Germany of the "Sturm und Drang" greeted *Götz* with stormy acclamation. But, at the same time, Goethe wove into the story his own life in Strassburg; he pictured himself in the wavering Weisslingen,

Götz von Berlichingen, 1771-73.

[1] *Werke*, 37, 191 ff. *Von deutscher Baukunst* in the same volume, 137 ff. A reprint of the *Frankfurter gelehrte Anzeigen vom Jahre* 1772, by W. Scherer and B. Seuffert (*Litteraturdenkmale*, 7, 8), Stuttgart, 1883.

[2] *Werke*, 39, 1 ff., and 8, 1 ff. A reprint of Götz von Berlichingen's *Lebensbeschreibung*, by A. Bieling, appeared at Halle in 1886.

and Friederike in Götz von Berlichingen's sister, Maria. Adalbert von Weisslingen was Götz's playmate at school, but their ways have separated; Götz lives as a free nobleman to whom might is right, in his castle on the Jaxt; Weisslingen has entered the service of the Bishop of Bamberg, and is on the highway to become a Court favourite. When the drama opens, Götz has seized the opportunity of a feud with the Bishop to take Weisslingen prisoner. In Jaxthausen, Weisslingen sees Maria and loves her, and Götz's noble behaviour and chivalrous treatment of him wins his heart. He resolves to leave the Court and join Götz, but returning to Bamberg to put his affairs in order, yields once more to the allurements of the Court party; he breaks his word to Götz, his troth to Maria. A heartless Court beauty, Adelheid von Walldorf, becomes his wife. Ultimately, Götz, who has put himself at the head of the peasants' revolt, is taken prisoner, and condemned to die by Weisslingen's hand. Maria comes to the latter and implores him by their love to save her brother's life; he tears the sentence of death, but himself dies poisoned by the hand of Adelheid, his wife. Adelheid is condemned to death by the Holy Vehm, and Götz succumbs to his wounds in the hands of his enemies, with the words "Es lebe die Freyheit!" upon his lips. Such is in brief the contents of the stormy tragedy which opened a new era in German literature. The style of the drama is in complete harmony with its spirit; no dramatic unities shackle its progress; the scenes change with a restlessness which it would be difficult to parallel in the Elizabethan drama. An exuberance of genius breathes through *Götz;* its figures are picturesquely grouped and varied, and drawn with a marvellous sureness of touch. It may, of course, be objected that the life in their veins is that of the "Sturm und Drang" of the eighteenth century and not of the age of the Reformation; their language—bold, straightforward, even to grossness—is only the poet's conception of the tongue that was spoken in the sixteenth century; while Götz himself, from a historical point of view, is idealised beyond recognition. But the tragedy is naturally not to be judged as a realistic drama according to modern canons; it is the creation of a poet—a poet's commentary on, and interpretation of, life.

Götz von Berlichingen was followed, in the autumn of 1774, by another work which was even more widely popular, *Die Leiden des jungen Werthers*. As *Götz* had been a reflection of Goethe's Strassburg life, so *Werther* reflects his life in Wetzlar, but more faithfully and directly, for the subject of *Werther* is not historical. In *Werthers Leiden* the "letter-novel" of the eighteenth century entered upon a new lease of life, but its immediate model was rather *La nouvelle Héloïse* than the novels of Richardson.[1] The basis of fact upon which *Werther* is built up was, in the first instance, of course, Goethe's love for Charlotte Buff in Wetzlar; several traits were also suggested by a passing interest in Maximiliane Brentano, daughter of Frau Laroche, and finally the suicide of a young colleague, Jerusalem by name, provided the novel with a conclusion. No book ever seized all hearts so powerfully as this simple story of unhappy love and suicide; over no book have so many tears been shed as over *Werther*. Its popularity is often accounted for by the fact that Goethe wrote for a morbidly sentimental age, but this explanation is unjust to the poet. It is hardly possible, for instance, that a man like Napoleon could have read *Werther* seven times had it been nothing but a sentimental love-story; and, if it appealed only to a passing fashion, it would have long ceased to be interesting. But this is manifestly not the case. The greatness of *Werther* lies in the faithful picture it gives of a human soul; Goethe never drew a more living man than Werther, and it is only necessary to compare him with a typical hero of eighteenth-century fiction, such as Rousseau's Saint-Preux, to realise where the consummate skill of the German poet lay. This gentle youth in the blue coat, yellow waistcoat, and top-boots, with his love for nature and his faith in Homer and Ossian, this tender, sensitive nature, which breaks under an overpowering passion, is one of the most convincing portraits to be found in the literature of the eighteenth century.

Die Leiden des jungen Werthers, 1774.

The appearance of *Werther* was the signal for an outburst of sentimental literature by no means restricted to the German language; all Europe was infected with the "Werther fever."[2] Parodies, such as Nicolai's *Freuden des jungen*

[1] Cp. E. Schmidt, *Richardson, Rousseau und Goethe*, Jena, 1875, 126 ff.
[2] Cp. J. W. Appell, *Werther und seine Zeit*, 4th ed., Oldenburg, 1896.

Werthers (1775), were incapable of stemming the flood, the effects of which were felt for long afterwards in German fiction. The best novel written under the influence of *Werther* was *Siegwart, eine Klostergeschichte* (1776), by the Swabian, J. M. Miller (1750-1814), who, it will be remembered, was one of the more prominent members of the "Göttinger Bund." In *Siegwart*, moonlight and lachrymose sentiment play, especially at the close, a considerable *rôle*, but the book is, after all, essentially an "educational" novel, for which the author's early life afforded materials; also, like the older educational novel, it is pointedly didactic in spirit. One of Goethe's friends, F. H. Jacobi (1743-1819), also followed in his footsteps with two books, *Aus Eduard Allwills Papieren* (1775) and *Woldemar* (1777-79), both of which found many readers; but, on the whole, their individual stamp was not sufficient to distinguish them from the ordinary sentimental literature of the time. More important is the influence which Jacobi in his turn exerted upon Goethe by drawing his attention to Spinoza, in whom the poet found refuge from the extremes of rationalism on the one side and Moravianism on the other. Jacobi's philosophic writings, such as his *Briefe über die Lehre des Spinoza* (1785), have more weight than his novels, which were, after all, merely philosophical treatises, clothed in sentimental garb. His elder brother, Johann Georg Jacobi (1740-1814), stands, as a lyric poet, intermediate between the older Anacreontic poetry of Gleim and the lyric of Goethe.

J. M. Miller's *Siegwart*, 1776.

F. H. Jacobi, 1743-1819.

J. G. Jacobi, 1740-1814.

Among the many new friends which the eventful year 1774 —perhaps the most eventful in the poet's whole life—brought Goethe, was the Zurich pastor Johann Kaspar Lavater (1741-1801). Lavater was in his day a spiritual force of wide-reaching authority; his fervid individualistic ideas on religion appealed strongly to his contemporaries. As a poet, he had, as we have seen, written dreary Biblical epics on the model of the *Messias*, as well as hymns inspired by Klopstock's *Odes*; but these were soon forgotten. His memory is kept alive solely by one remarkable work which, like Klopstock's *Gelehrtenrepublik*, bears witness to the unbalanced spirit of the "Sturm und Drang." This was the *Physiognomischen Fragmente zur Beförderung der Menschenkenntniss und Men-*

J. K. Lavater, 1741-1801.

schenliebe (1775-78)—to which Goethe himself contributed a few sketches—a fervid and totally unscientific forerunner of Gall's "Phrenology."

Lili Schönemann.

At the beginning of 1775, Goethe was once more involved in a great passion, this time for Lili Schönemann, a rich banker's daughter in Frankfort. Although the atmosphere of the Schönemann household was unsympathetic to the poet, who disliked the restraint of society, he engaged himself to Lili, and the "neue Liebe, neues Leben" brought in its train a burst of matchless lyric poetry; but as the year went on, he himself felt the force of the words he placed in the mouth of Ferdinand, the hero of *Stella*, "Ich muss fort in die freie Welt." An excursion to the St Gotthard with the two brothers Stolberg in the following summer cooled his affection for Lili, and when, at the close of the year, Karl August took him to Weimar, on a visit which ultimately proved to be for life, the engagement was broken without tragic consequences on either side.

The period between Goethe's return from Strassburg, in August, 1771, and his departure for Weimar, in November, 1775, was thus filled with the most varied and engrossing experiences for the young poet; and yet, notwithstanding the many distractions, he was busily engaged with literary work and plans. To these years belong more than half-a-dozen dramatic satires, in which Goethe enforced his own healthy, if still somewhat juvenile, views of literature. In *Götter, Helden und Wieland* (1774), he sallied forth against Wieland and the latter's superficial and untrue pictures of the ancient Greek world; in *Hanswursts Hochzeit* and the *Fastnachtsspiel vom Pater Brey* other affectations of the time were satirised. The exaggerated Rousseauism which had followed in the train of Herder's teaching is the subject of *Satyros oder der vergötterte Waldteufel*, while in the *Jahrmarktsfest zu Plundersweilern* the "Sturm und Drang" of the time is held up to ridicule. Lastly, *Des Künstlers Erdewallen* and *Des Künstlers Vergötterung* (afterwards remodelled as *Künstlers Apotheose*), are serious pleas for the honour of the artist's calling.

Dramatic satires.

More ambitious are *Clavigo* (1774) and *Stella* (1776), both "bürgerliche" dramas of the type which Lessing had perfected

Clavigo, 1774.

in *Emilia Galotti*. *Clavigo*, which came, it might be said, red-hot from the poet's brain in the course of a few days, is a variation of the story of Weisslingen in *Götz von Berlichingen;* and also reflects the Sesenheim tragedy. In the young Spaniard Clavigo, who, incited by his ambitions, abandons Marie de Beaumarchais and ultimately falls at the hand of her brother, Goethe once again dealt out that poetic justice to himself which, in actual life, he had escaped. In the compactness of its dramatic construction, *Clavigo* is a marked advance upon *Götz*, but its most admirable feature is the figure of Don Carlos, Clavigo's friend and mentor, the man of the world. If *Clavigo* still harks back to Strassburg,

Stella, 1775.

Stella, ein Schauspiel für Liebende, written in the spring of 1775, is clearly an echo of Goethe's engagement to Lili Schönemann; while the name of the heroine and the subject, the love of one man for two women, suggest Swift's biography as a source. Ferdinand is too weak a hero to hold the play together; and the mere fact that it was possible to substitute a tragic denouement for the original—and for its time so characteristic—ending in which Ferdinand took both wives to his bosom, showed that the plan was without true dramatic "necessity." Notwithstanding the psychological insight that distinguishes it, *Stella* is not one of the poet's masterpieces; and its origin is explained by Goethe's own words, "wenn ich jetzt nicht Dramas schriebe, ich ging zu Grund."[1] Two "Singspiele," which were subsequently remodelled, were also first written at this time, namely, *Erwin und Elmire* (1775) and *Claudine von Villa Bella* (1776).

Fragments.

Even more significant than the finished plays was the series of magnificent fragments which Goethe dashed off in inspired moments during these years. A great philosophic tragedy on *Sokrates* (end of 1771) was planned, a religious tragedy on the subject of *Mahomet*, an epic on the theme of *Der ewige Jude*. To the year 1773 belongs the beginning of a drama on *Prometheus*, which breaks off with the noble monologue:—

> "Bedecke deinen Himmel, Zeus,
> Mit Wolkendunst,
> Und übe, dem Knaben gleich,
> Der Disteln köpft,

[1] Letter to Auguste von Stolberg, March 1775 (*Briefe*, 2, 242).

An Eichen dich und Bergeshöhn;
Musst mir meine Erde
Doch lassen stehn,
Und meine Hütte, die du nicht gebaut,
Und meinen Herd,
Um dessen Gluth
Du mich beneidest." [1]

Faust, 1775.

But all these fragments sink into insignificance beside the tragedy of *Faust*, which had already received its earliest form before Goethe went to Weimar. With this work, which had occupied Goethe's attention since his student-days in Strassburg, the first period of his life culminates. As recently as 1887, a MS. copy of *Faust* was discovered in the form in which the poet brought it to Weimar — the so-called "Göchhausen'sche Abschrift." [2] This play of 1775 is essentially the *Faust* of the "Sturm und Drang," and might be said to represent the highest point which this movement in German literature reached. There is nothing in it of the calm philosophic spirit of the completed masterpiece; Goethe is not yet able to rise superior to his hero, as he does in the completed "First Part" (1808), and even to some extent in the published fragment of 1790. He is here one with Faust, and the drama is, in the most literal sense, a confession. He, too, had known the unsatisfied craving for new experiences, on the one hand, and the hatred of what Schiller called the "tintenklecksende Seculum" on the other; to him life was still full of contradictions and inexplicable problems.

The opening monologue reflects in its hearty "Knittelverse," which recall the drama of Hans Sachs, the attitude of the "Sturm und Drang" towards knowledge and learning. The apostrophe to the moon—

"Ach könnt ich doch auf Berges Höhn
In deinem lieben Lichte gehn,
Um Bergeshöhl mit Geistern schweben,
Auf Wiesen in deinem Dämmer weben,
Von all dem Wissensqualm entladen
In deinem Thau gesund mich baden!" [3]—

expresses the longing of the age to find in nature what it

[1] *Werke*, 39, 213.
[2] *Goethes Faust in ursprünglicher Gestalt*, edited by E. Schmidt, 5th ed., Weimar, 1901; also in the *Werke*, 39, 217 ff.
[3] *Werke*, 39, 220.

could not obtain from books. Here, too, in response to Faust's conjuration, the Erdgeist appears "in widerlicher Gestalt"—

> "In Lebensfluthen, im Thatensturm
> Wall ich auf und ab,
> Webe hin und her!
> Geburt und Grab,
> Ein ewges Meer,
> Ein wechselnd Leben!
> So schaff ich am sausenden Webstul der Zeit
> Und würcke der Gottheit lebendiges Kleid."[1]

The first scene of the drama closes with the dialogue between Faust and his "Famulus," Wagner; the next is that between Mephistopheles and the Scholar, or, as the old text has it, the "Student," a scene in which the young "Stürmer und Dränger" has an opportunity of pouring out his scorn of academic pedantry. There is, however, as yet no indication how Faust and Mephistopheles are to be brought together. "Auerbachs Keller" is a reminiscence of Leipzig, blended with later academic experiences, and, in its earliest form, leaves a fresher and more actual impression than that which the final version makes upon the reader; Faust, for instance, is not the calm onlooker of the more philosophic play; it is he and not Mephistopheles who bores the table and supplies the students with wine from the holes. The scene that bears the title "Strasse" opens the "Gretchen" tragedy, and is followed, as in the completed drama, by that which plays in Gretchen's "kleinem reinlichem Zimmer." Gretchen's naïve delight in the discovered ornaments and the ballad of "Der König in Thule" are, in their oldest form, if less polished, not on that account the less sincere and heartfelt; and the whole of this tragedy, with its fine pathos, the simple beauty of its love scenes, and, as a foil, the coarse but naïvely popular episodes in which Marthe takes part, was all already written in Frankfort. Here, too, is the wonderful prose scene, "Trüber Tag," followed by the unforgettable picture of Faust and Mephistopheles rushing past the gallows on black horses, and, above all, the scene in Gretchen's prison, a scene that seeks its like in dramatic literature; and all this came directly

The "Gretchen" tragedy.

[1] *Werke*, 39, 224 f.

out of the brain of this poet of twenty-five, in his period of "Sturm und Drang."

Still another of Goethe's dramas, *Egmont* (1788), belongs in its essentials to this period of his life. He began to write *Egmont* as early as 1775; and it was then planned as a tragedy of the type of *Götz*, enunciating the same principles of freedom and revolt. But before Goethe left Frankfort for Weimar, he had only sketched out the play as far as the third act; in 1778 and 1779, and again in 1781, new scenes were added; while the finishing touches were not put to the drama until the summer of 1787, when he was in Italy. In *Egmont*, Goethe has stretched the limits of dramatic form to the utmost; no other of his dramas, not even *Tasso*, is so deficient in progressive action. The "great" Graf Egmont, the leader of the revolt of the Netherlands against Spanish tyranny, is warned of the danger he runs in remaining in Brussels; he pays no attention to the warnings, is taken prisoner by the Duke of Alba, and executed—such is the slight plot upon which rests *Egmont's* claim to be regarded as a drama; all else in the play is episodic, and only serves to complete the picture of Egmont himself. The admirable "Volksscenen" are introduced to show how he was regarded by the populace of Brussels; Margarete von Parma, Machiavell and Oranien are only foils to bring his political position into prominence; Clärchen exists to let us see him in love; the various scenes are loosely thrown together without connection or construction. And yet, notwithstanding these shortcomings, *Egmont* remains one of Goethe's most impressive works. The hero himself, who has but little in common with the historical Egmont, is a masterpiece of dramatic characterisation; he is another Weisslingen, another Ferdinand, another Faust; he is again the "Stürmer und Dränger" with "two souls in his breast." Like these characters, Egmont is, to use Goethe's own expression, "dämonisch," but the tragic discord in Weisslingen's or Faust's life has in Egmont's given place to a calmer, more cheerful outlook upon the world. He is not, to the same extent, at war with existence; he wins the affection of all who come in contact with him; his tragic fate is his own trusting heart. But even to a greater extent than to the principal figure, the tragedy owes its

Egmont, 1775-88.

"Clärchen."

popularity to Clärchen. Like Gretchen, Clärchen bears witness to that faculty of laying bare a woman's soul which Goethe possessed in so remarkable a degree: the love-scenes between Egmont and Clärchen are among the truest he ever wrote. Egmont's "Geliebte" is not merely a replica of Gretchen; she bears indeed something of the same relation to Gretchen that Egmont bears to Faust: she is less tragic, and has still that light-hearted "Lebenslust" which Gretchen had lost—if she ever possessed it—before Faust knew her. She is less naïve and more self-conscious than Gretchen; and occasionally, as in her wonderful song, "Freudvoll und leidvoll, Gedankenvoll sein," there is a suggestion of that romantic poetry which forms a halo round Mignon.

Thus, although defective as a drama, *Egmont* is justified by its characters; it appeals to us by its broad human sympathy, the broader because the turbulence of *Götz* and *Clavigo* has subsided. It forms the transition in Goethe's work from the "Sturm und Drang" to the maturity of his life in Weimar, from *Götz* to *Iphigenie*.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE MINOR "STÜRMER UND DRÄNGER"; SCHILLER'S EARLY YEARS.

To Goethe's immediate circle of friends in Strassburg and Frankfort belonged three men—Lenz, Klinger, and Wagner—who may be regarded as typical representatives of the movement of "Sturm und Drang." Like Goethe himself at this time, all three were pre-eminently dramatists; their work was an immediate continuation of what H. W. von Gerstenberg (1737-1823), whose name has already been mentioned, had begun. Gerstenberg may be said to have ushered in the movement with what remained its best work of criticism, the *Briefe über Merkwürdigkeiten der Litteratur* (1766-70);[1] and in the tragedy, *Ugolino* (1768), in which Dante's story of the death of Count Ugolino and his sons by starvation is extended over five harrowing acts, he had put his own theories into practice. But Gerstenberg is in closer sympathy with Klopstock than Goethe; he was, after all, only a herald of the "Sturm und Drang."

H. W. von Gerstenberg, 1737-1823.

Jakob Michael Reinhold Lenz[2] was born in Livonia, in 1751; at the age of twenty, he found his way, like Herder, to Strassburg as a travelling tutor, and became an enthusiastic member of the group of "Stürmer und Dränger" who had gathered round Salzmann. He was seized with the ambition of being recognised as Goethe's equal, and to attain this end, not only sacrificed his own originality by trying to write like Goethe, but also imitated closely Goethe's manner of life.

J. M. R. Lenz, 1751-92.

[1] Ed. A. von Weilen (*Litteraturdenkm.*, 29, 30), Heilbronn, 1889; *Ugolino* will be found in D.N.L., 48, 191 ff.

[2] Lenz's *Gesammelte Schriften* were first edited by L. Tieck, Berlin, 1828; a selection by A. Sauer in *Stürmer und Dränger*, 2 (D.N.L., 80 [1883]). Cp. E. Schmidt, *Lenz und Klinger*, Berlin, 1878.

In Strassburg, for instance, he hoped to succeed his friend in Friederike's affection; and in Weimar, which he visited in 1776, the Duke called him Goethe's ape. His eccentricities were a source of amusement to Weimar society, until a tactless lampoon on Goethe, Frau von Stein, and the Court, compelled him to make a hasty retreat. In later years he was for a time insane, and, in 1792, died in extreme poverty near Moscow.

In Strassburg, Lenz gained a reputation as an admirer of Shakespeare, but in his own plays the only feature that recalls the English dramatist is the restless change of scene. He served his dramatic apprenticeship by adapting five of Plautus's comedies to the German stage (1774). These pieces are in the spirit of Holberg, and the dialogue, especially that of the comic scenes, shows a considerable advance on the old comedy of the Saxon School. Lenz's talent appears to most advantage in the two dramas, *Der Hofmeister, oder Vortheile der Privaterziehung* (1774), and *Die Soldaten* (1776): the former of these is a modern version of the story of Abélard and Héloïse, and exemplifies the danger of employing private tutors in good families where there are daughters; the second has also a "purpose," its theme being that the soldier is an enemy of society. Both plays belong to the category of "bürgerliche Schauspiele"; in both, the crude sentimentality of the German drama of a generation earlier and the moralising tone of Diderot are combined with the daring realism of the "Sturm und Drang." The combination is not altogether successful, but Lenz's realism is fresh and robust, his character-drawing always admirable, and his comic scenes are genuinely comic. *Der neue Menoza* (1774) is a satirical drama inspired by Rousseau, on the vices of civilisation, and *Die Freunde machen den Philosophen* (1776), which suffers under its exaggeratedly "Shakespearian" *technique*, closes with a scene similar to the last scene of Goethe's *Stella*, where the hero, it will be remembered, is left with two wives.

Der Hofmeister, 1774. *Die Soldaten*, 1776.

The theoretical basis of Lenz's dramatic work is to be found in the *Anmerkungen übers Theater* (1774), which were accompanied by a translation of the greater part of *Love's Labour's Lost*, under the title *Amor vincit omnia*. These "notes," which reveal an unexpected critical talent, give an ex-

Anmerkungen übers Theater, 1774.

cellent summary of the dramaturgic principles of the "Sturm und Drang." Lenz heartily agrees with Lessing in his contempt for the pseudo-classic drama of the French, but, unlike Lessing, has little respect for Aristotle. He despises all unities, except that of character; a drama is to consist merely of interesting "characters," and the theatre to become what Goethe called a "Raritätenkasten."

Lenz's lyrics.

The recent publication of Lenz's collected *Gedichte*[1] has led to a better appreciation of his remarkable lyric talent. In his songs, he stands in a closer relation to his model than in either his dramas or his prose, and it is still a matter of uncertainty whether certain lyrics of the *Sesenheimer Liederbuch* were written by Lenz or Goethe. Lenz's *Liebe auf dem Lande*, the subject of which is Friederike Brion, is one of the most beautiful poems of the time:—

"Denn immer, immer, immer doch
Schwebt ihr das Bild an Wänden noch
Von einem Menschen, welcher kam
Und ihr als Kind das Herze nahm.
Fast ausgelöscht ist sein Gesicht,
Doch seiner Worte Kraft noch nicht,
Und jener Stunden Seligkeit,
Ach jener Träume Wirklichkeit,
Die angeboren jedermann,
Kein Mensch sich wirklich machen kann."[2]

F. M. von Klinger, 1752-1831.

Friedrich Maximilian von Klinger (1752-1831),[3] like Goethe, a native of Frankfort, was, on the whole, the manliest and best-balanced dramatist of the "Sturm und Drang." He was not so highly gifted as Lenz, nor does his work show the same variety—in lyric talent, for instance, he was wholly deficient—but as a young man he was no less unbridled and extravagant than his friends, and none of them fell so completely under the influence of Rousseau as he. Beneath his extravagance, however, there lay a foundation of common-sense which was absent in the character of men like Lenz. Klinger's life falls into two halves, the division being formed by the year 1780, when he entered the Russian military service. In his earlier years he was for a time attached, as

[1] Ed. K. Weinhold, Stuttgart, 1891.
[2] K. Weinhold, *l.c.*, 150; D.N.L., 80, 233.
[3] Cp. M. Rieger, *Klinger in der Sturm- und Drangperiode*, Darmstadt, 1880; and E. Schmidt, *l.c.*, 62 ff. A selection from his works in A. Sauer's *Stürmer und Dränger*, 1 (D.N.L., 79 [1883]).

playwright, to a theatrical company, and his work was exclusively dramatic; during the period of his life in Russia, to which we shall return in the following chapter, he wrote mainly novels.

Klinger's career began with *Otto* (1775), a "Ritterdrama," written on the model of *Götz von Berlichingen;* it was followed by *Das leidende Weib* (1775), on which the influence of Lenz is conspicuous. In the next year appeared the dramas, *Die neue Arria*, *Simsone Grisaldo*, and, most notable of all, *Der Wirrwarr oder Sturm und Drang*, the play which gave its name to the movement. Klinger's *Sturm und Drang* is characteristic of the age in more than title: its subject—it is a love-story similar to that of *Romeo and Juliet*, with the American War of Independence as a background; its ebullient enthusiasm and unbridled passion; its language, broken by parentheses and marks of exclamation,—all this is the very essence of the "Geniezeit." But even *Sturm und Drang* was not so stormy as another of Klinger's tragedies, *Die Zwillinge* (1776), the most characteristic of these "Explosionen des jugendlichen Geistes und Unmuthes," as in after years their author called them. This is a grim tragedy of fraternal hatred, and from first word to last the action sweeps irresistibly along, heedless of psychological truth or probability. The villainous Guelfo kills his twin-brother Fernando, not merely because the latter is his successful rival in love, but also because Fernando is determined to assert his rights as eldest born, and Guelfo is stabbed by his own father. The double motive for the tragic catastrophe of Klinger's *Zwillinge* induced the actor Schröder to bestow the prize he had offered for the best German drama, upon it rather than on another tragedy which treated a similar theme and had been written for the same competition, *Julius von Tarent* (1774, printed 1776),[1] by J. A. Leisewitz. Leisewitz (1752-1806) was one of the stronger dramatic talents of his age, but he gave himself up less spontaneously to the spirit of the "Sturm und Drang" than either Lenz or Klinger. He had begun to write under the auspices of the Göttingen Bund, and his tragedy—his only work of importance—shows that he had learnt his art in Lessing's school rather than in Goethe's. *Julius von Tarent* is a powerful play on the love of two

Der Wirrwarr, 1776.

Die Zwillinge, 1776.

J. A. Leisewitz's *Julius von Tarent*, 1776.

[1] Cp. D.N.L., 79, 317 ff.; *Litteraturdenkm.*, 32 (1889).

brothers for the same woman, and Leisewitz spares no pains to make the dark side of his tragedy as terrifying as possible; but he has more restraint than Klinger; his dramatic effects are not so impulsive. This tragedy is the immediate forerunner of Schiller's *Räuber*, the last outstanding creation of the "Sturm und Drang."

H. L. Wagner; 1747-79.

The oldest of the "Goetheaner," Heinrich Leopold Wagner (1747-79),[1] a native of Strassburg, has least claim upon our attention. His tragedies, *Die Reue nach der That* (1775) and *Die Kindermörderinn* (1776), belong to the category of "bürgerliche Trauerspiele"; they discuss social problems, and help to fill the gap between *Emilia Galotti* and *Kabale und Liebe*. The "Kindermörderin" is a butcher's daughter who is seduced by an officer; she flees from her parents, who both subsequently die; finally, in despair, she kills her child and is executed. The difference of social caste, a motive that recurs again and again in the drama of the "Sturm und Drang," forms the basis of *Die Kindermörderinn;* but Wagner's treatment of the theme is crude and revolting, and the play reads like a criminal report in dramatic form. The resemblance of the plot to that of the "Gretchen tragedy" in *Faust* is not accidental, Goethe having himself told Wagner of the subject in Frankfort. A more pleasing example of Wagner's genius is his *Prometheus, Deukalion und seine Recensenten* (1775), a witty harlequinade in "Knittelverse" in defence of Goethe and *Werther*.

Maler Müller, 1749-1825.

Friedrich Müller (1749-1825),[2] or, as he preferred to be called, "Mahler Müller," did not, like Lenz and Klinger, begin as a "Stürmer und Dränger"; he stands between the quiet, old-world sentimentalism of Gessner and the virile and tumultuous literature of the "Geniezeit." His earliest poems were inspired by Gessner's *Idylls;* in the *Schaaf-Schur eine Pfälzische Idylle* (1775), on the other hand, he abandons the rococo style of the Swiss poet for the realism of the age that produced *Luise* and *Der Hofmeister*. Müller's passive temperament was easily impressed by outside influences; his lyric drama *Niobe* (1778) bears witness to his admiration for Klopstock, and even the triviality of the

[1] E. Schmidt, *H. L. Wagner*, Jena, 1875; A. Sauer in D.N.L., 80, 275 ff. A reprint of *Die Kindermörderin* in the *Litteraturdenkm.*, 13, Heilbronn, 1883.

[2] A. Sauer, *Stürmer und Dränger*, 3 (D.N.L., 81 [1883]). Cp. B. Seuffert, *Maler Müller*, Berlin, 1877.

anacreontic rhymers has left traces on his poetry. In later life—from 1778 on he lived mainly in Rome—Maler Müller came into touch with the Romantic School.

Of the favourite themes of this age, none had a greater fascination for the "Stürmer und Dränger" than that of the magician who sells his soul to the devil in exchange for superhuman powers. Like Goethe, and like Klinger in one of his later novels, Müller, too, was attracted by the saga of *Faust;* in 1776, he dedicated his *Situationen aus Fausts Leben* to "Shakespeares Geist," and two years after, published the first part of *Fausts Leben dramatisirt.* Müller's *Faust* only resembles Goethe's in so far as it was also the goblet into which the author poured his own dreams and aspirations. The Ingolstadt professor of Müller's tragedy is again the typical "Übermensch" of the "Sturm und Drang," but he is neither idealist nor hero; Müller describes him in his preface as—

Müller's *Faust*, 1776-78.

> "ein Kerl, der alle seine Kraft gefühlt, gefühlt den Zügel, den Glück und Schicksal ihm anhielt, den er gern zerbrechen wollt, und Mittel und Wege sucht—Muth genug hat alles nieder zu werfen, was in Weg trat und ihn verhindern will. Wärme genug in seinem Busen trägt, sich in Liebe an einen Teufel zu hängen, der ihm offen und vertraulich entgegen tritt."[1]

Golo und Genoveva, 1781.

A better-constructed drama, *Golo und Genoveva*, which was written in 1781, but not published until 1811, serves admirably, if compared with Tieck's romantic play on the same subject, to show the difference between the unbalanced enthusiasm of the "Sturm und Drang" and the more mature and passive spirit of Romanticism. *Golo und Genoveva* belongs essentially to the category of "Ritterdramen."

The minor dramatists of the "Geniezeit" were seriously handicapped. Their early work had been unduly overshadowed by *Götz von Berlichingen*, and they had hardly begun to win an independent position for themselves when *Die Räuber* appeared, and they were once more forced into the background. Johann Friedrich Schiller,[2] the second child

Johann Friedrich Schiller, 1759-1805.

[1] Reprint by B. Seuffert (*Litteraturdenkm.*, 3), Heilbronn, 1881, 8. Besides the *Fausts* of Goethe, Maler Müller, and Graf Soden (referred to below), the theme was in this period made the subject of dramatic treatment by P. Weidmann (*Johann Faust*, 1775), A. W. Schreiber (*Scenen aus Fausts Leben*, 1792), J. F. Schink (*Johann Faust*, 1804), and K. Schöne (1809).

[2] The two chief biographies of Schiller, by J. Minor (1, 2; Berlin, 1890) and R. Weltrich (1, Stuttgart, 1885-99), are still far from completion. Cp. also

of an army-surgeon in Würtemberg, was born at Marbach on the 10th of November, 1759; he was four years old when the family removed to Lorch, and seven when they settled in Ludwigsburg. In Schiller's childhood, the halo of poetry which surrounded Goethe's is missing, and anything idyllic or beautiful in it soon came to an end; beyond a talent for writing Latin verses, and a period of religious enthusiasm which culminated in his confirmation in the spring of 1772, there was also nothing remarkable about his schooldays. Theology, as was not unnatural in a boy of his temperament, was his favourite study, but Duke Karl Eugen of Würtemberg, whose tyranny threw its shadow on all Schiller's youth, decreed otherwise; he claimed the promising scholar for his new school in the "Solitude" near Ludwigsburg. A protest from Schiller's father made it clear that the latter had either to resign his son to the Duke's will or himself make shift for his bread; and so, in the beginning of 1773, Schiller became a "Karlsschüler," destined to be formed into a jurist by a process of military drill. The only bright points in this school-life in the "Solitude" were the passionate friendships Schiller formed. His enforced studies were hateful to him in the extreme, and it was a slight change for the better when, in November, 1775, the school was transferred to Stuttgart and a medical faculty instituted, which he was allowed to join.

As "Karlsschüler."

In the "Solitude" at Ludwigsburg, Schiller worshipped the *Messias* as the *ne plus ultra* of poetry; in Stuttgart his poetic horizon rapidly widened. Surreptitiously he found opportunities of reading the most popular dramas of the day—*Götz*, *Die Zwillinge*, *Julius von Tarent*—and himself began to plan a drama similar to these, with *Cosmo di Medici* as hero. *Werther*, too, made a deep impression upon him, and his projected *Student von Nassau* would probably have been a romance on the same lines. In the meantime, however, *Die Räuber*—the plot of which had been suggested to him by a short story by C. F. D. Schubart—

those by J. Palleske, 13th ed., Stuttgart, 1891, O. Brahm (not completed, Berlin, 1888-92), and O. Harnack (in *Geisteshelden*, 28, 29), Berlin, 1898. A "historisch-kritische" edition of Schiller's works, edited by K. Goedeke, appeared at Stuttgart in 17 volumes between 1867 and 1876; in D.N.L., Schiller is edited by R. Boxberger and A. Birlinger, and occupies vols. 118-129 (13 vols. [1882-90]). A critical edition of Schiller's *Briefe*, in 7 vols., is edited by F. Jonas, Stuttgart, 1892-96.

was taking shape. All through 1780, Schiller worked at it, and when, in December of that year, he left the Academy, entitled to practise as a doctor, the drama was virtually finished.

Die Räuber, 1781.

Die Räuber (1781) is the great revolutionary drama of German literature, the one genuinely political tragedy of the "Sturm und Drang." It does not, like *Götz*, play in a remote age, but—so far as it has any historical character at all—during the Seven Years' War. The subject, a tragedy of two brothers, was one of the favourite themes of the "Sturm und Drang." Karl Moor, endowed with all the qualities the age admired, but estranged from father and home by the machinations of his brother Franz, becomes the leader of a robber-band in the Bohemian forests. Like another Götz, he punishes vice and arrogance and assists the needy and the oppressed; he is an "edler Räuber." But he is seized with a longing to see his home again, where, meanwhile, Franz has imprisoned their father in a tower, with the intent of slowly starving him to death, and has attempted without success to win for himself his brother's betrothed, Amalia. Karl rescues his father, only to see him die, while Franz eludes the robbers whom Karl has sent to capture him, by killing himself. A reward is on the robber's head, and he recalls a poor man who stands in need of assistance. Thus he voluntarily "appeases the laws he has offended and restores the order of the world," which, as he now realises, he has helped to destroy rather than to uphold.

The poet himself may not have been responsible for the motto, "In tirannos," attached to the second edition of the tragedy, but these words express its spirit. *Die Räuber* is, we might say, a direct challenge to the political tyranny that loomed so large on Schiller's own horizon at this time. When the young Bohemian nobleman, Kosinsky, under the pressure of wrong and outrage, joins Moor's robber-band, or when Karl Moor himself denounces with burning eloquence the tyranny of State and ruler, of Church and social usage, of civilisation itself, Schiller speaks straight from his own rebellious heart.

"Das Gesez," he cries, "hat zum Schneckengang verdorben, was Adlerflug geworden wäre. Das Gesez hat noch keinen grossen Mann gebildet, aber die Freyheit brütet Kolosse und Ex-

tremitäten aus. . . . Stelle mich vor ein Heer Kerls wie ich, und aus Deutschland soll eine Republik werden, gegen die Rom und Sparta Nonnenklöster sein sollen."

Or again in the scene with the Pater at the close of the second act:—

"Da donnern sie Sanfftmuth und Duldung aus ihren Wolken, und bringen dem Gott der Liebe Menschenopfer, wie einem feuerarmigen Moloch—predigen Liebe des Nächsten, und fluchen den achtzigjährigen Blinden von ihren Thüren hinweg:—stürmen wider den Geiz, und haben Peru um goldner Spangen willen entvölkert und die Heyden wie Zugvieh vor ihre Wagen gespannt. . . . O über euch Pharisäer, euch Falschmünzer der Wahrheit, euch Affen der Gottheit!"[1]

Die Räuber, published privately and anonymously in 1781, was received with an enthusiasm which soon made a second edition necessary. The first performance, for which Schiller had prepared a special version, took place at Mannheim in the beginning of 1782, and met with equally great success, the only shadow on the happiness of the young poet—who was present—being that he had to some extent outgrown his work. He had by this time definitely resolved to devote himself to literature; he was not only the anonymous author of the *Räuber*, but had also published a lyric *Anthologie auf das Jahr* 1782, which, however, shows rather the crudity and unripeness of the beginner than the genius to which the tragedy bears witness. Schiller's position in Stuttgart was meanwhile becoming more and more untenable. The Duke was firm in his determination that, whatever reputation the poet might gain, he should remain army-surgeon in Würtemberg and nothing more. Schiller had before him a warning example in the fate of his fellow-countryman, the poet and musician C. F. D. Schubart (1739-91),[2] who, in 1777, was lured by Duke Karl Eugen into Würtemberg, arrested, and thrown into the castle of Hohenasperg. His crime, for which he atoned with ten years' imprisonment in this fortress, was the revolutionary tone of his review, the *Deutsche Chronik* (begun in 1774), aggravated by some tactless personal attacks on the Duke. As a poet, Schubart's sympathies were with Klopstock and the Göttingen

Anthologie auf das Jahr 1782.

C. F. D. Schubart, 1739-91.

[1] *Sämmtliche Schriften*, 2, 30 and 104.

[2] Cp. A. Sauer, *Stürmer und Dränger*, 3 (D.N.L., 81 [1883]), 291 ff. A complete edition of Schubart's *Gedichte* in Reclam's *Universal-Bibliothek*, No. 1821-1824, ed. G. Hauff, Leipzig, 1884.

School. *Die Fürstengruft* (1779 or 1780), his most famous poem, written in prison, is a philippic against tyrants which recalls the odes of Voss and Stolberg:—

> "Da liegen sie, die stolzen Fürstentrümmer,
> Ehmals die Götzen ihrer Welt!
> Da liegen sie, vom fürchterlichen Schimmer
> Des blassen Tags erhellt!"[1]

The poet is seen, however, in a more advantageous light in some of his *Gedichte aus dem Kerker* (1785-86)—*Der Gefangene*, for instance—and in the fine song in praise of colonisation, *Das Kaplied* (1787).

Schiller's flight from Stuttgart.

Buoyed by the hopes he placed in Dalberg, the intendant of the Mannheim Court Theatre, where *Die Räuber* had been produced, Schiller at last resolved upon flight; and his plan was successfully carried out on the evening of the 22nd of September, 1782. But in Mannheim, bitter disappointments awaited him; almost a year elapsed before he received the appointment he coveted of "Theatre poet" in that town. Ready as Dalberg had been to welcome the young army-official from Würtemberg who wrote *Die Räuber*, he was naturally little inclined to extend the same favour to Schiller the deserter. The young man's position was for a time desperate, until, thanks to the good-hearted Henriette von Wolzogen, mother of one of his fellow-students, he found a place of refuge in the secluded Thuringian village of Bauerbach. Here he arranged the stage version of his second play, *Fiesco*—it was already written before he made his escape from Stuttgart—and finished his third tragedy, *Louise Millerin*, or, as Iffland rechristened it, *Kabale und Liebe*.

Fiesco, 1783.

Die Verschwörung des Fiesko (*Fiesco*) *zu Genua* (1783) is a more ambitious effort than *Die Räuber;* but poetically it falls short of the latter, the author being obviously less in sympathy with the subject. In turning to the story of Fiesco di Lavagna's conspiracy against the great house of Doria in Genoa, Schiller was attacking a theme which lay as yet beyond his powers: *Fiesco* is not only the tragedy of an individual, but also of a state. At the same time, he unrolled in this play a succession of interesting scenes, and the *dramatis personæ* are a marked advance upon those of

[1] A. Sauer, *l.c.*, 3, 375.

Die Räuber. The women, it is true, are still the conventional puppets whose acquaintance Schiller had made only in books, but none of them is quite so colourless as Amalia. On the other hand, a remarkable power of dramatic characterisation is to be seen in figures like Fiesco himself, the noble republican Verrina, and, above all, in the Moor, Fiesco's tool. It is these characters, the human, if not the political, interest of the intrigue, and the crisp, epigrammatic —sometimes, too epigrammatic—language which give Schiller's first historical drama the place it still holds upon the national stage.

While in *Fiesco* Schiller aimed at creating a political tragedy on the Shakespearian lines of the "Sturm und Drang," he returned, in his next play, *Kabale und Liebe* (1784), to the "bürgerliche Trauerspiel" which, since *Emilia Galotti*, had attained such popularity on the German stage. *Kabale und Liebe* and *Emilia Galotti* are typical of two distinct epochs of German literature. *Emilia*, clear, concise, well balanced, well constructed, belongs wholly to the century of the "Aufklärung"; it is the poetry of an age of prose. *Kabale und Liebe*, on the other hand, throbs with new poetic life and kindles the reader's imagination. *Emilia* presents us with an unchanging picture of certain aspects of Court life, while Schiller's tragedy calls up before our minds the entire *milieu* of a petty German Court. In Lessing, all lies on the printed page: Schiller suggests a many-coloured relief. *Kabale und Liebe* is the best "tragedy of common life" in the literature of the eighteenth century.

Kabale und Liebe, 1784.

Like *Emilia Galotti*, Schiller's drama plays in a provincial "Residenz," and the petty intrigues of the Court form the background of the action. Ferdinand, son of the President von Walter, an official who by dubious methods has obtained complete control of the affairs of the little State, loves the daughter of a musician, Miller. The President will naturally hear nothing of a marriage, intending instead to marry his son to Lady Milford, a cast-off mistress of the reigning Duke. The attempt to separate the lovers by straightforward means fails, and the President, following the counsel of his secretary, Wurm, has recourse to deceit. Louise, in the belief that her father's life depends on her sacrifice, is forced to write, at Wurm's dictation, a letter in which she appears to be carry-

ing on an intrigue with a Court official, Marshal von Kalb. This letter is played into Ferdinand's hands, and Louise's oath prevents an explanation until she has drunk the poisoned lemonade which her lover has prepared for her and for himself. The President and his secretary arrive in time to see the results of their intrigue, and, as the drama closes, they are handed over to justice for their earlier misdemeanours.

In some measure *Kabale und Liebe* is, like its two predecessors, a political tragedy; it, too, bids tyranny defiance and breathes revolution. But the politics of the drama are overshadowed by its purely poetic strength. Its kernel is neither, as in *Die Räuber*, an open revolt against tyranny, nor, as in *Fiesco*, a conspiracy; *Kabale und Liebe* is essentially a love story, and Ferdinand and Louise stand, like Romeo and Juliet, in the foreground of the action. Ferdinand is not always a convincing lover, but he has enough in him of the youthful enthusiasm of Karl Moor to awaken our sympathy; he is still human and individual, and contrasts favourably with the conventional types of youth, the Maxes and Mortimers, who appear in the dramas of Schiller's riper years. The other male characters of the play are admirably drawn, and although none of them is as interesting as the Moor in *Fiesco*, they are all more clearly focussed than the figures in the earlier play. The two fathers, Miller the musician and the President, are admirably contrasted; Wurm is modelled on Lessing's Marinelli, and Kalb is Schiller's most successful experiment in satirical caricature. But the greatest advance is to be seen in the two women, Louise and Lady Milford. The latter is one of the best female portraits Schiller ever drew; she is a more sympathetic creation—more of a tragic heroine—than her prototype, Gräfin Orsini, although occasionally the young poet shows his limitations by emphasising the aristocrat in Lady Milford rather than the woman. Louise, when compared with Goethe's or Lenz's heroines, is conventional and theatrical, but she is involved in a conflict of such overpowering interest that the reader is ready to overlook her lack of simplicity in thought and speech.

Even after all three dramas[1] had found warm recognition

[1] Cp. on Schiller's early dramas, A. Kontz, *Les drames de la jeunesse de Schiller*, Paris, 1899.

throughout Germany — *Kabale und Liebe* was produced in Frankfort and Mannheim about three months after *Fiesco*— Schiller's position changed little for the better. His connection with the Mannheim theatre lasted only for a year, and, when this was over, he was at the mercy of creditors. As a final resource he turned to journalism, and in the spring of 1785, the first number of *Die Rheinische Thalia* appeared, a periodical which he succeeded in keeping alive under varying fortunes as *Die Thalia* (1785-91) and *Die neue Thalia*, down to 1793. In June 1784, he received a friendly letter from four young admirers of his poetry in Leipzig, C. G. Körner, who remained through life his closest friend, L. Huber, and their *fiancées*, the sisters Minna and Dora Stock, and, nine months later, he accepted an invitation—a welcome solution to his difficulties—to visit them. While still in Mannheim, Schiller experienced the first and probably the only great passion of his life, the object of which was the brilliant Charlotte von Kalb, wife of a French officer. Some idea of the intensity of the poet's feelings may be obtained from their reflection in the love of Don Carlos for Elisabeth, or in the poems entitled *Freigeisterei der Leidenschaft* (*Der Kampf*) and *Resignation*:—

Die Rheinische Thalia, 1785.

Charlotte von Kalb.

"Nein—länger länger werd ich diesen Kampf nicht kämpfen,
den Riesenkampf der Pflicht.
Kannst du des Herzens Flammentrieb nicht dämpfen,
so fodre, Tugend, dieses Opfer nicht.

Geschworen hab ichs, ja, ich habs geschworen,
mich selbst zu bändigen.
Hier ist dein Kranz. Er sey auf ewig mir verloren,
nimm ihn zurück und lass mich sündigen."[1]

[1] *Schriften*, 4, 23.

CHAPTER IX.

SCHILLER'S SECOND PERIOD. END OF THE "STURM UND DRANG."

In April 1785, Schiller accepted the invitation of his unknown friends in Leipzig. The chief of them, Körner, had already gone to Dresden as "Oberkonsistorialrat," but the poet received a hearty welcome from the others, and spent the summer months in the village of Gohlis near Leipzig. In the autumn, he followed Körner to Dresden. The chief event of the summer was Körner's marriage, for which Schiller wrote a poem of many strophes. But the change which came over the poet's life is better expressed in the jubilant pæon, *An die Freude* (1785), written about the same time.

An die Freude, 1785.

"Freude, schöner Götterfunken,
Tochter aus Elisium,
Wir betreten feuertrunken
Himmlische, dein Heiligthum.
Deine Zauber binden wieder,
Was die Mode streng getheilt;
Alle Menschen werden Brüder,
Wo dein sanfter Flügel weilt.

Seid umschlungen, Millionen!
Diesen Kuss der ganzen Welt!
Brüder—überm Sternenzelt
Muss ein lieber Vater wohnen."[1]

This passionate hymn to joy and friendship not only, like the odes of Klopstock and Uz, recalls the antique in form and measure; its ideas, too, have more of the dithyrambic fervour of Pindar than of the Germanic enthusiasm of Schiller's predecessors; it is a union of Greek ideals with the great-hearted humanitarianism of the eighteenth century.

During the quiet, peaceful months which Schiller spent in

[1] *Schriften*, 4, 1; the text quoted is that of the *Gedichte* (1803), 2, 121.

Dresden and its neighbourhood, he was mainly occupied with contributions to the *Thalia* and with his next drama, *Don Carlos*. For the *Thalia* he wrote two short stories, *Verbrecher aus Infamie* (1787) and the *Geisterseher* (1789), both concessions to the prevalent taste of the time rather than creations which add to the poet's repute. *Der Geisterseher* is well-constructed, and contains many pages of admirable description, but it is overweighted with crass and sensational magic effects —suggested by the career of Cagliostro—by means of which a young prince is made a convert to Catholicism.

Der Geisterseher, 1789.

Don Carlos, Infant von Spanien, or, as it was entitled in the early editions, *Dom Carlos* (1787), is a work of very different calibre. With this tragedy, Schiller won for himself a new domain of his art and enormously increased his fame as a dramatic poet; in form and style, it is a complete break with the three prose dramas that preceded it. The poet had also, it is true, begun *Don Carlos* in prose, but he ultimately wrote it in the iambic blank verse which Lessing had established on the German stage with *Nathan der Weise*.[1] Although *Don Carlos* thus opens the series of Schiller's dramas in verse, the ideas contained in it are still juvenile and reminiscent of the "Sturm und Drang"; a wider gulf divides it from *Wallenstein* than from *Fiesco* or even *Die Räuber*. The plot of *Don Carlos*, a plot to which the English dramatist, Otway, had been drawn more than a hundred years before Schiller, centres in the love of the Spanish heir-apparent, Don Carlos, for his stepmother Elizabeth. The king is led by his confessor Domingo and the cruel Duke of Alba to suspect his son; Princess Eboli, a lady of the Court, who is herself passionately in love with Carlos, is the means of this suspicion becoming a certainty. Meanwhile, Carlos's attempts to stifle his feelings by devoting himself to an active political life are baffled by the circumstances which hedge in a king's son; a tragic issue to his passion is the only possible one, and his father surprises him

Don Carlos, 1787.

[1] As early as the seventeenth century, attempts had been made to adapt English blank verse to German requirements. Gottsched regarded it favourably, but Bodmer, as was to be expected, was its chief advocate. J. E. Schlegel, Wieland, Klopstock, Brawe, Weisse, and Gotter, all wrote dramas in iambic verse before Lessing's *Nathan*, and even Goethe had experimented with it in his youth (*Belsazar*, 1765). Cp. A. Sauer, *Über den fünffüssigen Jambus vor Lessings Nathan*, Vienna, 1878.

in a stolen interview with the queen, and delivers him into the hands of the Grand Inquisitor. In the matter of construction, this drama is inferior to its predecessors. The characters, too, are more shadowy than those of the early works; they seem to suffer from the restraint caused by the adoption of verse. *Don Carlos* is a play of intrigue and misunderstandings; there is a lack of tragic dignity in the decisive moments of Don Carlos's fate, and the poet does not always give his intrigue the semblance of probability. The most serious defect in it, however, is its lack of unity. Originally planned while the poet was engrossed by his passion for Charlotte von Kalb, it was to have been only a "domestic tragedy in a royal house," and in this spirit the first three acts were written and published in the *Rheinische Thalia* in 1785.[1] But when Schiller, in the contentment of his Dresden life, revised these acts and wrote the remaining two, his interest in his hero had grown cold; another character of the play took a more prominent place in the foreground, namely, the friend of Don Carlos, the Maltese knight, Marquis Posa. The domestic tragedy was converted into a tragedy of political principles, love intrigue gave place to a flaming plea for freedom, and Marquis Posa, who wins the king's favour by his avowal that he cannot be a "Fürstendiener," became the real hero of the play. In the scene between Posa and Philipp in the third act is concentrated some of the noblest political thought of the eighteenth century; Posa's cosmopolitan idealism points out the way that was leading to the French Revolution. "Sie wollen," he tells the king:—

"Sie wollen
Allein in ganz Europa—sich dem Rade
Des Weltverhängnisses, das unaufhaltsam
In vollem Laufe rollt, entgegen werfen?
Mit Menschenarm in seine Speichen fallen?
Sie werden nicht! Schon flohen Tausende
Aus Ihren Ländern froh und arm. Der Bürger,
Den Sie verloren für den Glauben, war
Ihr edelster . . .

O, könnte die Beredsamkeit von allen
Den Tausenden, die dieser grosser Stunde
Theilhaftig sind, auf meinen Lippen schweben,
Den Strahl den ich in diesen Augen merke,
Zur Flamme zu erheben! . . .

[1] Reprinted in the *Schriften*, 5, 1, 1 ff.; in its final form, 5, 2, 142 ff.

Alle Könige
Europens huldigen dem Span'schen Namen.
Gehn Sie Europens Königen voran.
Ein Federzug von dieser Hand, und neu
Erschaffen wird die Erde. Geben Sie
Gedankenfreyheit."[1]

With the completion of *Don Carlos*, Schiller's "Lehrjahre" reached their close; about the same time, the poet came into touch with the Weimar circle, to which, since the day in Darmstadt in 1784, when he read the first act of *Don Carlos* before the Duke of Weimar, it had been his ambition to belong. In the summer of 1787, he paid his first visit to Weimar. Only, however, disappointments were in store for him here: Goethe was in Italy, the Duke absent; Herder and Wieland received him politely but without enthusiasm. Schiller withdrew into himself, and spent his time in supplementing deficiencies in his knowledge. He began by throwing himself ardently into the study of history. In the winter of 1787-88 and the ensuing summer, he wrote the *Geschichte des Abfalls der vereinigten Niederlande*, of which the first and only volume—it was originally planned in six—appeared in the autumn of 1788. This was followed in 1791-93 by a second large historical work, the *Geschichte des dreissigjährigen Krieges*, as well as a number of shorter historical studies and investigations. Schiller's qualities as a historian are, as might be expected, in the first instance, literary: he treated the writing of history as an art, and gave German historians a lesson in style. But he did not possess the judicial mind or the scientific method of the born historian, and ideas rather than facts mark the course of his histories. The interest of the poet in Don Carlos led him to write the history of the Netherlands, a similar interest in Wallenstein attracted him to the Thirty Years' War. Regarded as history, the second of these works is the least successful. Schiller did not understand the complicated national problems of the Thirty Years' War; he was content to look upon it as a duel between two religious principles, and, as soon as the representative leaders, Wallenstein and Tilly, disappeared, the war lost its interest for him. Sympathetic ideas and great personalities were what

Schiller in Weimar.

Historical writings.

[1] *Schriften*, 5, 2, 313 ff.

he sought in history; when he found them, he expended upon them all the wealth of his poetic imagination and full-sounding rhetoric. Thus, even allowing for the change that has come over the spirit of history in the nineteenth century, Schiller does not occupy a high place as historian. The representative German writer of this class at the end of the eighteenth century was Johannes von Müller (1752-1809), whose chief work, the *Geschichte schweizerischer Eidgenossenschaft* (1786-1808), is still recognised as a masterpiece of historical writing.

It was chiefly due to the *Geschichte des Abfalls der vereinigten Niederlande* that Schiller obtained, through Goethe's mediation, the vacant professorship of History in the University of Jena. In May, 1789, he held his first lecture in the university; in February of the following year, he married Charlotte von Lengefeld, a relative of his former benefactress, Frau von Wolzogen. Schiller's acquaintance with Charlotte dated from December, 1787, and, in Rudolstadt in the following summer, this acquaintance ripened into love. His marriage helped him to forget his disappointments in Weimar, for, in 1790, he was still not a recognised member of the literary circle there. Between Goethe and him there seemed to be a feeling of mutual distrust. Schiller worked himself into the belief that he actually hated Goethe, while in reality he only envied him his good fortune. Goethe, on his part, could not free himself from the disagreeable impression he had received from Schiller's work on his return from Italy. The criticism of Bürger's poetry which Schiller wrote in 1791, for the *Jenaische Allgemeine Literatur-Zeitung* —a criticism in which his antagonism to the principles of the Romantic School may already be detected — gave Goethe a higher opinion of his abilities; and the noble verses on *Die Götter Griechenlands* (1788) convinced him that Schiller was a poet of no mean order. This poem bears witness to the ardour with which Schiller had devoted himself to the study of Greek literature opened up to him by Voss's *Homer*. In 1789, he translated the *Iphigenia in Aulis* of Euripides, and his Greek interests explain to some extent his antipathy to Bürger; they, too, lie behind that wonderful confession of faith, *Die Künstler* (1789), a poem which contains the germs of all Schiller's theorising on æsthetic questions.

Professor in Jena.

Die Götter Griechenlands, 1788.

Die Künstler, 1789.

In the routine of professional duties he was, meanwhile, gradually losing his enthusiasm for history; his thoughts turned to philosophy, a subject which had engrossed him in earlier life, and he fell under the spell of Immanuel Kant, whose work had just given a mighty impetus to German metaphysics.

To understand what Schiller's dramas meant for German literature, it is necessary to consider the condition of dramatic literature in the last quarter of the eighteenth century. Since the failure of Lessing's attempt to create a National Theatre in Hamburg, the German theatre as an institution had gained in stability, and this stability was chiefly due to Friedrich Ludwig Schröder (1744-1816),[1] the leading German actor of the eighteenth century. Schröder succeeded where Lessing's friends had failed, in giving Hamburg a permanent "Schauspielhaus"; he may, indeed, be regarded as the creator of the modern German stage. During the period of his directorship in Hamburg, he laid down the lines on which the state and municipal theatres of Germany are still conducted; it was he, for instance, who set Shakespeare's plays at the head of the classical repertory, a place which they have never ceased to occupy. But Schröder's theatre suffered from the want of a living dramatic literature. Lessing's dramas, although the best before the "Sturm und Drang," were, as we have seen, difficult to imitate with success, being deficient in that peculiar germinative quality which inspired poetic work, however crude, never lacks. Thus the repertory of the German theatres before the appearance of Goethe and Schiller's masterpieces consisted chiefly of indifferent "bürgerliche Tragödien" varied by sentimental and lachrymose adaptations from the English and French. Schröder himself provided the stage with a large number of such adaptations, the best of which were *Der Ring* (1783), a version of Farquhar's *Constant Couple*, *Der Vetter in Lissabon* (1784), and, most effective of all, *Das Porträt der Mutter* (1786).

F. L. Schröder, 1744-1816

The first town to follow Hamburg's example in establishing a theatre on a permanent basis was Mannheim, where, in 1779, the "Nationaltheater" was inaugurated under the

The Mannheim theatre.

[1] Cp. B. Litzmann, *F. L. Schröder* (two vols. have appeared), Hamburg, 1890-94. Cp. A. Hauffen, *Das Drama der klassischen Periode*, 2, 1 (D.N.L., 139, 1 [1891]), 85 ff.

direction of W. H. von Dalberg, and in Mannheim the first performance of Schiller's *Räuber* had taken place. Here, too, *Der deutsche Hausvater*,[1] by Otto Heinrich von Gemmingen (1755-1836), a companion piece to Diderot's *Père de famille* (1758), was produced, in 1780. *Der deutsche Hausvater*, which had considerable influence upon the subsequent development of the German "bürgerliche Tragödie," is similar in plot to *Kabale und Liebe*, but has little literary value. The importance of the theatre in Mannheim for the history of the drama is mainly due to the fact that at this time the ablest member of its staff was August Wilhelm Iffland (1759-1814).[2] Iffland had served his apprenticeship under the actor Konrad Ekhof (1720-78), and in Mannheim rose rapidly to be the first actor of his time. Although not a pioneer as Schröder had been, he was, beyond question, the chief force in the theatrical world, at the zenith of German classical literature. Under his direction, from 1796 until his death in 1814, the Prussian National Theatre in Berlin was the most important institution of its kind in North Germany. Iffland had, moreover, a finer literary talent than Schröder, and among the sixty-five plays that he has left, several, such as *Die Jäger* (1785), *Die Hagestolzen* (1791), and *Der Spieler* (1796), are by no means contemptible as literature. Most of his pieces, however, are disfigured by a somewhat tearful sentimentality and a blatant insistence on morality, but they were effective on the stage, afforded excellent *rôles*, and gave a true picture of the life and manners of the time.

O. H. von Gemmingen, 1755-1836.

A. W. Iffland, 1759-1814.

The dramatic work of Schröder and Iffland represented a similar stratum in the drama to that formed by the "family novel"—which continued to be the favourite nutriment of the reading public—in fiction. But in the last quarter of the eighteenth century there existed a still lower form of the drama, the so-called "Ritterdrama," into which the historical tragedy of the "Sturm und Drang" had degenerated. This class of play maintained a place on the German stage until well into the nineteenth century, and was analogous to the "Schauerromane" or "tales of terror," which formed so large a proportion of the fiction of this period. The "Ritter-

The "Ritterdrama."

[1] Cp. A. Hauffen, *l.c.*, 1 ff.

[2] Cp. A. Hauffen, *l.c.*, 189 ff. Iffland's *Meine theatralische Laufbahn* has been reprinted by H. Holstein in the *Litteraturdenkm.*, 24, Heilbronn, 1886.

drama" followed closely in the wake of *Götz von Berlichingen*, but it is obvious that the imitation of Goethe's tragedy was a wholly superficial one; the rattle of armour, the dungeon and Holy Vehm, the rough mediævalism of word and deed —these were the features which the "Ritterdrama" had in common with its model. It is significant for the degenerate character of these "plays of chivalry" that the first, Klinger's *Otto* (1775), should never have been surpassed. Such literary pretensions as the authors of the "Ritterdramen" had, were annulled by the absence of character-drawing, and by the blood-curdling sensationalism in which they dealt. Apart from Klinger, the two leading playwrights of this class are Graf J. A. von Törring (1753-1826), whose popular *Agnes Bernauerin* was played in 1780, and Joseph Marius Babo (1756-1822), the author of *Otto von Wittelsbach*, published in 1782. Both plays, it may also be noted, were produced in Munich, where the "Ritterdrama" was warmly encouraged. Another South German dramatist, Graf F. J. H. von Soden (1754-1831), whose chief interest, however, was political economy, was the author of a chivalric tragedy, *Ignez de Castro* (1784) and a "Volksdrama" on the subject of *Doktor Faust* (1797).[1]

The drama in Austria.

Of the Germanic races, the Austrians would seem to possess most natural talent for the drama; the theatre is a more universally popular institution in Vienna than in any other German-speaking capital. Since the beginning of the eighteenth century, the Viennese "Volkstheater" has never lacked popular actors: J. A. Stranitzky (1676-1727) naturalised the Italian *commedia dell' arte* in Vienna, and his successor, Gottfried Prehauser (1699-1769), made the "Hanswurst" the typical comic character on the Viennese stage. The serious history of the Austrian theatre begins, however, in 1776, when Joseph II. practically founded the "Hofburgtheater," the most important of all German theatres.[2] For a time, it is true, the Viennese theatre depended mainly upon North German dramatists; Austria's contributions to German dramatic literature, at the close of the eighteenth century,

The Hofburgtheater.

[1] Cp. O. Brahm, *Das deutsche Ritterdrama des 18. Jahrhunderts (Quellen und Forschungen*, 40), Strassburg, 1880. Specimens will be found in A. Hauffen's *Das Drama der klassischen Periode*, 1 (D.N.L., 138 [1891]); Klinger's *Otto* is reprinted in *Litteraturdenkm.*, 1, Heilbronn, 1881.

[2] Cp. R. Lothar, *Das Wiener Burgtheater*, Leipzig, 1899.

consisted of little more than imitations of *Minna von Barnhelm*, and family tragedies in the manner of Iffland. The name of only one dramatist need be mentioned here, Cornelius Hermann von Ayrenhoff (1733-1819), an Austrian officer of high rank, who cultivated the French Alexandrine tragedy in Austria, and may be regarded as a belated follower of Gottsched. One of his comedies, *Der Postzug, oder die nobeln Passionen* (1769), which was warmly admired by Frederick the Great, was long a favourite on the German stage. In the lyric drama, however, Austria, or, at least, Vienna, began, at an early date, to lead the way. Gluck's *Alceste*, as has been already remarked, had been produced in Vienna in 1767, and in 1782, Wolfgang Gottlieb (or Amade) Mozart (1756-91), a native of Salzburg, ushered in a new period in the history of the German "Singspiel" with *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*. But the Viennese dramatists were not able to satisfy Mozart's requirements, and for his two next operas, *Die Hochzeit des Figaro* (1786) and *Don Juan* (*Don Giovanni*, 1787), he turned to the Italian, Da Ponte, for his texts. The former of these is an adaptation of the famous comedy by Beaumarchais, *La Folle Journée*, while *Don Juan* is a more original version of the theme which Molière had dramatised in *Le Festin de Pierre;* but Mozart's last masterpiece, *Die Zauberflöte* (1791), was again a German "Singspiel." With an almost childlike naïveté, he poured his noblest music into a loosely constructed Viennese "Posse," whose chief merit in his eyes was that it mirrored his own enthusiasm for the ideals of the "Aufklärung."

C. H. von Ayrenhoff, 1733-1819.

W. A. Mozart, 1756-91.

Before the appearance of *Don Carlos* in 1787, the "Sturm und Drang" had wellnigh spent itself. A strange, anomalous genius has still, however, to be mentioned, a genius in whom were mingled the light grace of Wieland and the stormy intoxication of the "Geniezeit"; this was the Thuringian, Johann Jakob Heinse (1749-1803),[1] who, in 1787, after three years' residence in Rome, published his most popular novel, *Ardinghello, oder die glückseligen Inseln*. The hero of this romance is the typical heaven-stormer of the age; Ardinghello is an artist and a dreamer, who ultimately founds on Grecian

J. J. Heinse, 1749-1803.

[1] Heinse's *Sämmtliche Werke*, ed. H. Laube, 10 vols., Leipzig, 1838; a new edition by C. Schuddekopf has begun to appear, Berlin, 1902. Cp. F. Bobertag, *Erzählende Prosa der klassischen Periode*, 1 (D.N.L., 136, 1 [1886]), 52 ff.

isles a realm as free as the "Thelema" of Rabelais. The plot of *Ardinghello* is in its way as extravagant as the early dramas of the "Sturm und Drang," and the love-adventures are described in a tone of southern sensualism, but the book has a particular interest in so far as it throws its shadow on the succeeding literary period; *Ardinghello* is a forerunner, although not, of course, in the same degree as *Wilhelm Meister*, of the art-novels of the Romanticists. In Heinse's second novel, *Hildegard von Hohenthal* (1795), the only other of his books which had much success, music takes the place which painting occupied in *Ardinghello*. As musical criticism, especially in its fine estimate of Gluck, *Hildegard von Hohenthal* has a certain value; as literature, it is disfigured, even more than its predecessor, by lack of restraint.

M. Klinger's second period.

The representative novelist of the close of the "Sturm und Drang" was Maximilian Klinger,[1] who has already been discussed as one of the leaders of the literary revolution. The work of his second period, free as it is from the unbalanced turbulence of his early life, shows an almost classic dignity. Two dramas in prose, *Medea in Korinth* and *Medea auf dem Kaukasos* (1791), which belong to these years, deserve a place among the best modern plays on Greek subjects; but his most solid and lasting achievement is the cycle of nine novels which he sketched out in 1790. It was his intention to make these novels a receptacle for all he himself had ever thought or experienced, for his own philosophy of life. The cycle opens with *Fausts Leben, Thaten und Höllenfahrt* (1791), which was followed by the *Geschichte Giafars des Barmeciden* (1792) and the *Geschichte Raphaels de Aquillas* (1793). The struggle of the heroes of the "Sturm und Drang" against an untoward fate is here fought out anew, but the tragedy is no longer purely personal; it has, as it were, become typical of the history of the race and stands against a background of philosophical pessimism. *Reisen vor der Sündfluth* (1795) and *Sahir* (1798) are of the nature of political satires, while in *Der Faust der Morgenländer* (1797) the conflict between the ideal and the real, which is to be found in all Klinger's work, is treated in a more conciliatory spirit than in the opening novel. The last three

[1] M. Rieger, *Klinger in seiner Reife*, Darmstadt, 1896. Cp. A. Sauer, *Stürmer und Dränger*, 1 (D.N.L., 79 [1883]), where *Fausts Leben* is reprinted.

works of the series, the *Geschichte eines Teutschen der neusten Zeit* (1798), *Der Weltmann und der Dichter* (1798), and the collection of aphorisms entitled *Betrachtungen und Gedanken über verschiedene Gegenstände der Welt und der Litteratur* (1803-1805), are also the ripest; they are on themes taken from Klinger's own time, and in them he approaches as near as any of the classical writers to a harmonious solution of the problems which the "Sturm und Drang" had awakened in the German mind.

K. P. Moritz, 1757-93.

Less ambitious than the "art-novels" of Heinse or Klinger's philosophical romances, *Anton Reiser, ein psychologischer Roman* (1785),[1] by Karl Philipp Moritz (1757-93), demands special attention in a history of German fiction at the close of the "Sturm und Drang." This novel stands in the direct line between *Agathon* and *Wilhelm Meister*. It is an unpretentious story, mainly autobiographical, like Jung-Stilling's *Jugend;* yet before *Wilhelm Meister*, no book of the eighteenth century painted with such convincing truth a young man's initiation into the trials of life. The theory of the modern psychological novel is implied in the few words of preface with which the book opens:—

Anton Reiser, 1785.

"Wer den Lauf der menschlichen Dinge kennt, und weiss, wie dasjenige oft im Fortgange des Lebens sehr wichtig werden kann, was anfänglich klein und unbedeutend schien, der wird sich an die anscheinende Geringfügigkeit mancher Umstände, die hier erzählt werden, nicht stossen. Auch wird man in einem Buche, welches vorzüglich die innere Geschichte des Menschen schildern soll, keine grosse Mannigfaltigkeit der Charaktere erwarten: denn es soll die vorstellende Kraft nicht vertheilen, sondern sie zusammendrängen, und den Blick der Seele in sich selber schärfen."

Anton Reiser is born in extreme poverty, and, beginning life as a hatmaker's apprentice in Brunswick, has to fight his way through all manner of hardships; the dream of his life is to win a name for himself on the stage, but, once success is within sight, he is bitterly disappointed with what he had regarded as the ideal world of Shakespeare and Goethe. This is practically the thread of narrative on which the novel hangs, but the importance of the book lies, not in its story, but in its keen observation and fine

[1] Ed. L. Geiger, *Litteraturdenkm.*, 23, Heilbronn, 1886. Cp. F. Bobertag, *l.c.*, 165 ff.

insight. The restless spirit of the "Sturm und Drang" is still present, but now and again we are reminded of that new world which Goethe's broad humanitarianism had revealed to his contemporaries. Moritz, who belonged to Goethe's circle of friends in Rome, wrote also on æsthetic subjects, and his *Reisen eines Deutschen in England im Jahr* 1782 (1783) and *Reisen eines Deutschen in Italien in den Jahren* 1786 *bis* 1788 (1792-93) are valuable documents of the time.

J. G. Forster, 1754-94.

Johann Georg Forster (1754-94), another writer who stood on the confines of the "Geniezeit," lived an extraordinarily adventurous life. Brought up in England, he accompanied his father on Cook's second voyage round the world (1772-75), and on his return wrote an account of it in English (*A Voyage towards the South Pole and Round the World*, 1777). Returned to Germany, he was appointed to a professorship in Kassel, which in 1784 he exchanged for a similar chair in the University of Wilna in Poland; but life in Wilna soon became unendurable to him, and he was glad to return to Germany in 1787. A year later he obtained a librarianship in Mainz. A fiery enthusiast for freedom, a "Weltbürger" like Marquis Posa, Forster greeted the French Revolution with enthusiasm; but the horrors of the actual rising as he saw them in Mainz convinced him that it was not the hoped-for panacea for all social ills. He died in Paris in 1794. His masterpiece is the *Ansichten vom Niederrhein, von Brabant, Flandern, Holland, England und Frankreich im April, Mai, Junius* 1790 (1791),[1] one of the most remarkable books of travel that has ever been written. Nature and people, politics and art, nothing escapes Forster's wide glance, and for everything that comes under his notice he has the same unflagging interest; the art of Iffland or a picture by Rubens is described with no less loving care than the geological structure of the Rhine valley; and, above all, the book is written in so vivid and picturesque a style that it has remained one of the masterpieces of German prose.

Ansichte vom Niederrhein, 1791.

[1] Ed. W. Buchner in the *Bibl. der deutschen Nationallitt.*, 13, 14, Leipzig, 1868.

CHAPTER X.

GOETHE'S FIRST TWENTY YEARS IN WEIMAR.

THE Goethe who has been hitherto considered, was simultaneously a child of his age and its leader; in Leipzig, Strassburg and Frankfort, he had belonged wholly to the literary movement in the midst of which he was placed; and during his last years in Frankfort, he was the acknowledged head of the "Sturm und Drang." From his twenty-seventh year onwards, Goethe was by no means so intimately bound up with the epoch; for the first fifteen years at least of his life in Weimar, he held entirely aloof from literary schools and movements. His personal development had been so rapid as to outstrip his time, and, after his return from Italy, his attitude to literature was even antagonistic. We have now to turn to the history of Goethe's life and work between his arrival in Weimar in the end of 1775, and the beginning of his friendship with Schiller in 1794.

As far as poety was concerned, the first years which Goethe spent in Weimar present a marked contrast to the period which preceded them: his best energies were for a time directed to other channels. Duke Karl August, with a clearness of judgment remarkable in so young a man—it must not be forgotten that while Goethe was six-and-twenty when he went to Weimar, his sovereign was only a youth of eighteen—saw that the poet whom he had called to his Court was more than a man of letters; and in spite of the opposition of his elders, he gave him one responsible position after another in the government of the Duchy. And the first month or two of unsettled life over, Goethe showed that the Duke's confidence in him was not misplaced. He threw himself zealously into his new duties, and poetry was

Goethe in the service of the State.

neglected. For the development of Goethe's mind these years were of undeniable value; in fulfilling the daily duties of his official position, he passed through a school of character, a process of humanitarian education which infinitely widened his horizon. He learned to know men, not only through the coloured glass of literature, but face to face in everyday life. His official interest in forestry, in agriculture, in the mines at Ilmenau, first drew his attention to botany and mineralogy, and many of the lessons that were subsequently embodied in *Wilhelm Meister*, such as the necessity of self-control and self-abnegation in the service of one's fellow-men, Goethe learned as a servant of the Weimar State. Indeed, it might almost be said that the distance which from this time on separated Goethe from his contemporaries was mainly due to the balance of character which political responsibility gave him. In his immediate circle—Wieland stood somewhat apart—literature was but indifferently represented, and chiefly in a spirit of dilettantism. The literary reputation of the most talented member, Major K. L. von Knebel (1744-1834), who had introduced Goethe to the Duke in 1774, rested exclusively on his translations of Propertius and Lucretius. During the early years in Weimar, the guiding star of Goethe's life was Charlotte von Stein (1742-1827), who, although seven years his senior and the mother of several children, inspired him with a passion which lasted until his journey to Italy in 1786-88. Of all the women whom he loved, Frau von Stein was intellectually the worthiest of him; his love for her was the most spiritual and satisfying he ever experienced. At the same time, there was nothing in his relations with her of that naïve irresponsibility with which he had loved Gretchen, Friederike, or even Lili; Frau von Stein seems always to have retained something of the reserve of the Court lady. Goethe's correspondence with her,[1] of which only his share has been preserved, is more than a collection of love-letters; it also reflects an intellectual friendship similar to that which, in the next epoch of his life, appears in his correspondence with Schiller.

Charlotte von Stein, 1742-1827.

Frau von Stein is less directly mirrored in Goethe's poetry than Friederike or Lotte; but there was a reason for this.

[1] Ed. J. Wahle, 2 vols., Frankfort, 1899, 1900; also in the Weimar edition, Abt. 4, 3-9 (1888-91).

Goethe had now outgrown the purely subjective stage of his work; his conception of poetic creation no longer admitted of a direct reproduction of his impressions and experiences in his writings; the immediate subjectivity of *Werther*, *Götz*, *Clavigo* gave place to the more objective spirit of *Iphigenie* and *Tasso*, and thus, although the lyrics of this period reveal the poet's happiness in his new passion, they are only exceptionally direct love-songs. In the whole range of Goethe's poetry, the lyrics he wrote at this time have never been surpassed. As an example, the poem *An den Mond* may be cited, the opening verses of which are:—

Lyrics of this period.

"Füllest wieder Busch und Thal
Still mit Nebelglanz,
Lösest endlich auch einmal
Meine Seele ganz;

Breitest über mein Gefild
Lindernd deinen Blick,
Wie des Freundes Auge mild
Über mein Geschick."[1]

The dominant note which runs through such poetry is a passionate love for nature; it is characteristic also of the distichs which in the collected poems bear the title *Antiker Form sich nähernd*, in *Wonne der Wehmuth*, in the *Wandrers Nachtlied*, and that beautiful expression of man's oneness with nature:—

"Über allen Gipfeln
Ist Ruh,
In allen Wipfeln
Spürest du
Kaum einen Hauch;
Die Vögelein schweigen im Walde.
Warte nur, balde
Ruhest du auch."[2]

Although nature-poetry has played so large a part in the European literature of the past hundred and fifty years, no poet ever penetrated as deeply into the soul of nature as Goethe during his early years in Weimar; the contrast between *Werther* or *Götz* and the calm beauty of poems like

[1] *Werke*, 1, 100. Cp. R. Kögel, *Goethes lyrische Dichtungen der ersten Weimarischen Jahre*, Basle, 1896.
[2] *Werke*, 1, 98.

Ilmenau and the *Zueignung* is so great that it is difficult to believe they are the work of a single writer. The second of these opens the *Gedichte* in Goethe's collected writings, but it was originally intended as the beginning of a religious epic, *Die Geheimnisse*, which, begun in 1784, was to cover no less wide a field than the *Ewige Jude* of the poet's earlier days.

Harzreise im Winter, 1777.

In 1777, Goethe had made the *Harzreise im Winter* which fills a volume of his works, and, in 1779, he accompanied the Duke of Weimar on a second Swiss journey, the account of which (*Briefe aus der Schweiz*) was first published in Schiller's *Horen* in 1796. To the same time belong also the Singspiel *Jery und Bätely* (1780), and the fine *Gesang der Geister über dem Wasser*. The one-act drama, *Die Geschwister*, written in October, 1776, a delicate study of sisterly affection which gives place to a warmer love, reads more like an echo of the years in Frankfort than an immediate "confession," but into it Goethe undoubtedly also infused something of his own relations to Frau von Stein. More important works, however, were in the background. *Iphigenie auf Tauris*, as we now know it, was not completed until 1787, when Goethe was in Rome, but eight years before, the first prose version of the drama was performed by amateurs in Weimar, Goethe himself playing the *rôle* of Orest. In the same way *Tasso*, too, as far as plan and conception are concerned, dates from the period which preceded the poet's visit to Italy. And to *Tasso* must be added the beginnings of *Wilhelm Meister*. As early as 1777, Goethe had sketched out and begun a romance of the theatre which was to bear the title *Wilhelm Meisters theatralische Sendung*.

Die Geschwister, 1776.

Goethe in Italy, 1786-88.

On the 29th of October, 1786, Goethe first set foot in Rome; the following spring was spent in Naples and Sicily; and in the beginning of June, 1787, he was again in Rome, where he remained until the 2nd of April, 1788. Goethe's "italienische Reise"—the volume of his works which bears this title was compiled from letters and diaries in 1816 and 1829—made a deep incision into his Weimar life; it was an event of enormous import for his intellectual development. Just as Herder had brought Goethe's youth to a focus in Strassburg, so the journey to Italy now seemed to introduce clearness and order into his mind. The tentative experiments of his first ten years in Weimar, his search after a higher ideal

of beauty, that classic beauty of repose at which he had aimed in his first sketches of *Iphigenie* and *Tasso* — all these strivings first attained their object in Italy. In Italy, Goethe's life, regarded as a whole, touched its zenith; from the height he here attained, he was able to look back upon the turbulent years of his youth, and forward into the new epoch that lay before him like a promised land. In Italy, the mission of his life seems all at once to have become clear to him. Under the Roman sun, his ideals of Art, the art of painting, of sculpture, as well as poetry, ripened; the last vestiges of the one-sided Germanic enthusiasm which had burst into dithyrambs before the Strassburg Minster or a Shakespearian tragedy, disappeared, and gave place to a more catholic conception of greatness in art—a conception which arose essentially from Winckelmann's revelation of the nature of antique beauty. The art-theories of Goethe's mature years—and this is his true significance for the history of art —fulfil the promise of Winckelmann's work: in Goethe, the eighteenth century's conception of beauty, which combined the humane ideals of the "Aufklärung" with a classic repose, reaches its fullest development.

Schriften, 1787-90.

But the poet's time in Italy was not entirely taken up in studying art. In 1787, he had begun to publish the first collected edition of his writings (*Goethes Schriften*, 8 vols., 1787-90), and several works had to be revised and completed in order that they might take their place in these volumes. The smaller "Singspiele" were remodelled, and a new one, *Scherz, List und Rache*, was added; *Iphigenie* was remoulded, *Tasso* all but finished. Plans of new classical dramas, an *Iphigenie auf Delphos* and a *Nausicaa*, were sketched out, but remained fragments. A few at least of the magnificent *Römischen Elegien* were actually written in Rome, but the majority belong to the following years at home. Goethe's thoughts were not, however, exclusively restricted to classic grooves; he could at times recall enough of the "Gothic" spirit to complete *Egmont*, and, strangest contrast of all, to write the scene in the "Hexenküche" for *Faust*. In 1790, this drama was first published under the title *Faust, ein Fragment*.[1]

In no work of Goethe's is the poetic inspiration more

[1] A convenient reprint in *Litteraturdenkm.*, 5, Heilbronn, 1882.

convincing than in *Iphigenie auf Tauris* (1787). No poem, not even *Faust*, was so often written and rewritten; as we possess it in its final form—the form which it received in Italy—it is the most artistically perfect, the most spiritual, of all the poet's writings. In none, certainly, has the dross of subjectivity—and on the heights where *Iphigenie* stands, one may speak even of Goethe's subjectivity as dross—been so completely eliminated, or at least transmuted into poetry. The poet's relations with Frau von Stein, it is true, give the drama its psychological background, but they have been completely transformed; in other words, *Iphigenie* is the least personal of Goethe's more important works.

Iphigenie auf Tauris, 1787.

> "Heraus in eure Schatten, rege Wipfel
> Des alten, heil'gen, dichtbelaubten Haines,
> Wie in der Göttinn stilles Heiligthum,
> Tret' ich noch jetzt mit schauderndem Gefühl,
> Als wenn ich sie zum erstenmal beträte,
> Und es gewöhnt sich nicht mein Geist hierher.
> So manches Jahr bewahrt mich hier verborgen
> Ein hoher Wille, dem ich mich ergebe;
> Doch immer bin ich, wie im ersten, fremd.
> Denn ach mich trennt das Meer von den Geliebten,
> Und an dem Ufer steh' ich lange Tage,
> Das Land der Griechen mit der Seele suchend;
> Und gegen meine Seufzer bringt die Welle
> Nur dumpfe Töne brausend mir herüber.
> Weh dem, der fern von Eltern und Geschwistern
> Ein einsam Leben führt!"[1]

So muses Agamemnon's daughter, Iphigenie, before her temple at Tauris, in the land of the Scythians, whither the goddess Artemis had borne her when she was about to fall a victim to her father's vow. Before the drama opens, Iphigenie has already had a civilising influence upon the barbarians; human sacrifices are no longer offered to propitiate the deities. The Scythian king, Thoas, demands her hand in marriage; and he persists in his demand, even when she reveals to him that she is of the race so hated by the gods, the race of Tantalus. In the meantime, however, two strangers have arrived at Tauris; the disappointed king sends them to her with the command that the old rites are to be renewed and human sacrifices are not to be withheld from the goddess. These strangers, who, unrecognised by Iphigenie, are her brother Orestes and his friend Pylades, are to be the first victims. Pylades tells

[1] *Werke*, 10, 3.

her of the great events before Troy and the tragic fate of her own race; how Orestes, stained with the blood of his mother, seeks, in accordance with Apollo's command, "the temple of his sister," from which he must obtain the statue of the goddess, if he is to escape the Furies who are in pursuit of him. But Orestes, impatient of disguise, reveals himself to Iphigenie—

> "Ich bin Orest! und dieses schuld'ge Haupt
> Senkt nach der Grube sich und sucht den Tod;
> In jeglicher Gestalt sey er willkommen!"[1]—

and learns in turn that it is his sister who stands before him. The confession of his guilt relieves Orestes from his burden; the presence of his noble sister, purifying and sanctifying, frees him from the phantasms of his disordered brain:—

> "Es löset sich der Fluch, mir sagt's das Herz.
> Die Eumeniden ziehn, ich höre sie,
> Zum Tartarus und schlagen hinter sich
> Die ehrnen Thore fernabdonnernd zu.
> Die Erde dampft erquickenden Geruch
> Und ladet mich auf ihren Flächen ein,
> Nach Lebensfreud' und grosser That zu jagen."[2]

With this scene the action reaches its culminating point. The three friends have now to make good their escape with the image of the goddess. But the deceit which the heroine of Euripides' tragedy does not scorn to employ is impossible to Goethe's high-souled, modern Iphigenie. Thoas has been kind to her; she confesses all to him, and the openness of her words wins him for her friend. Thus, the dramatic knot which the Greek dramatist cut forcibly by introducing Artemis herself, is here untied by the moral force of the heroine's character. With the Scythian king's friendly "Lebt wohl!" to the departing Greeks, the drama closes.

Calmly beautiful as *Iphigenie auf Tauris* is, the charm which appeals to us in it is not that of antique art. Goethe's play is not a Greek tragedy; its "stille Grösse" is not the "stille Grösse" which Winckelmann discovered in the sculpture of antiquity, but that of the century of humanitarian ideals. Goethe transferred the antique saga as he found it in Euripides, to his own age; he removed what was crass,

[1] *Werke*, 10, 47. [2] Ibid., 10, 58.

incredible, and unmodern from it—the deception and cunning in which the Greek mind saw no guile, the crude solution of the tragic complications by the aid of supernatural intervention — and he created characters which, to use an expression which he applied to them fifteen years afterwards, are "verteufelt human."

Iphigenie was followed by *Torquato Tasso* (1790), the origin of which may also be traced back to the earlier period of Goethe's life in Weimar. *Tasso* is clearly a more subjective drama than *Iphigenie:* the scene of the action, the Court of Duke Alfonso II. of Ferrara, has many points of similarity to that of Weimar, and incidents in Goethe's own relations with the Duke of Weimar, with the Duchess and Frau von Stein, are reflected in it. *Tasso* is the tragedy of a sensitive poet whose failing is his lack of self-control; hence it is essentially a psychological drama with little plot or outward conflict. It opens at the moment when Tasso, having finished his epic, *La Gerusalemme liberata*, is crowned with a laurel wreath by the Duke's sister, Leonore von Este. To Antonio Montecatino, the Duke's Secretary of State, who has just returned from Rome, this honour appears as an undeserved flattery: he accuses Tasso of courting a comparison with Virgil and Ariosto. Notwithstanding the Princess's attempts to bring about a reconciliation, the breach between the poet and the man of the world grows wider; and ultimately Tasso so far forgets himself as to draw his sword on Antonio. The Duke places him under arrest, but subsequently bids Antonio restore Tasso sword and freedom, and seek reconciliation with the offended poet. As proof of his sincerity, Tasso asks Antonio to obtain the Duke's permission for him to leave Ferrara, and Antonio reluctantly consents. Unhappy at the prospect of his separation from the Court, Tasso confesses his love to the Princess Leonore, who naturally rejects his presumptuous suit. Forsaken on every side, the poet turns to Antonio, to find in this man of common-sense, his best friend. The poetic charm of *Tasso* is even more delicate than that of *Iphigenie*, but as a play it is inferior to the latter. The character of Antonio—the most important for the comprehension of the action—is too shadowy and complicated to be convincing; at times it seems as if there were really two Antonios, one at the beginning of the drama and another at its close.

Torquato Tasso, 1790.

The whole work, indeed, gives the impression of falling asunder into two parts. But despite such blemishes, *Tasso* remains one of the most subtle of Goethe's creations; it is, above all, a drama for poets, the fullest confession of a poet's life—of the joys and sorrows, the temptations and disappointments, to which a delicately strung man of genius is exposed. The whole tragedy of Tasso's soul is concentrated in his last words to Antonio:—

"Hilft denn kein Beyspiel der Geschichte mehr?
Stellt sich kein edler Mann mir vor die Augen,
Der mehr gelitten, als ich jemals litt;
Damit ich mich mit ihm vergleichend fasse?
Nein, alles ist dahin!—Nur Eines bleibt:
Die Thräne hat uns die Natur verliehen,
Den Schrey des Schmerzens, wenn der Mann zuletzt
Es nicht mehr trägt—Und mir noch über alles—
Sie liess im Schmerz mir Melodie und Rede,
Die tiefste Fülle meiner Noth zu klagen:
Und wenn der Mensch in seiner Qual verstummt,
Gab mir ein Gott, zu sagen wie ich leide. . . .

Zerbrochen ist das Steuer, und es kracht
Das Schiff an allen Seiten. Berstend reisst
Der Boden unter meinen Füssen auf!
Ich fasse dich mit beyden Armen an!
So klammert sich der Schiffer endlich noch
Am Felsen fest, an dem er scheitern sollte."[1]

Goethe's return to Weimar.

When, in June 1788, Goethe returned to Weimar, it was small wonder that he felt little in harmony with his surroundings. If he had outgrown his age before he went to Italy, how much more was this the case after his return? The turbulence of the "Geniezeit" still agitated the surface of German literature, and filled Goethe with repugnance for the writings of his countrymen. Even his old friends, among them Frau von Stein, whom he had once loved so passionately, appeared like strangers to him in the cold, unsympathetic light of the northern sky. The period immediately after his return from Italy was the least productive of the poet's life, and until the stimulus of Schiller's friendship began to act on him in 1794, he was to a large extent estranged from literature. To the years between 1788 and 1794 belong the *Venetianischen Epigramme* (1796), written in 1790 on a visit to Venice, and the admirable translation of the Low German

Epigramme, 1796.

[1] *Werke*, 10, 243 f.

Beast Epic, *Reineke Fuchs*, which appeared in 1794. The *Römischen Elegien* (1795), with their glow of southern passion and their statuesque Italian beauty, were mainly inspired by a new love of Goethe's, Christiane Vulpius, who, to the scandal of Weimar society, lived with the poet for eighteen years as faithful helpmate before, in 1806, he made her his wife. She is the "forest flower" in the poem *Gefunden*:—

Reineke Fuchs, 1794. *Römische Elegien*, 1795.

"Ich grub's mit allen
Den Würzlein aus,
Zum Garten trug ich's
Am hübschen Haus.

Und pflanzt'es wieder
Am stillen Ort;
Nun zweigt es immer
Und blüht so fort."[1]

In 1792, Goethe was brought rudely into touch with the actualities of life. At the Duke's command, he accompanied him on that disastrous campaign against the French, by means of which the German princes hoped to stem the flood of revolution. Goethe's account of the campaign—*Campagne in Frankreich*, 1792—was not published until 1822, when it formed part of his autobiography.

Before the decisive moment arrived when Goethe recognised in Schiller a friend who could stimulate his interest in poetry, he had published in the *Neue Schriften* (7 vols., 1792-1800) the beginning of his romance, *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre*. *Wilhelm Meister*, which, as we have seen, had been planned in 1777, as a novel of theatrical life, occupies a central position in the development of the German novel. On the one hand, it is the culmination of the novel of the eighteenth century which commenced with imitations of Richardson; on the other, the basis for the modern novel of the Romantic School, and the direct forerunner of the autobiographical novels of modern German literature. It is thus, in a higher degree than any other work of fiction, the typical German novel.

Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre, 1795-96.

Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre is not only very loosely constructed, but also its hero is not strong enough to dominate and set his mark upon the whole. The novel is held

[1] *Werke*, 1, 25.

together neither by its plot nor its characters but by an ethical idea. In January, 1825, Goethe said to Eckermann:—

"Es gehört dieses Werk übrigens zu den incalculabelsten Productionen, wozu mir fast selbst der Schlüssel fehlt. Man sucht einen Mittelpunkt, und das ist schwer und nicht einmal gut. Ich sollte meinen, ein reiches mannigfaltiges Leben, das unsern Augen vorübergeht, wäre auch an sich etwas ohne ausgesprochene Tendenz, die doch bloss für den Begriff ist. Will man aber dergleichen durchaus, so halte man sich an die Worte Friedrichs, die er am Ende an unsern Helden richtet, indem er sagt: 'Du kommst mir vor wie Saul, der Sohn Kis, der ausging, seines Vaters Eselinnen zu suchen und ein Königreich fand.' Hieran halte man sich. Denn im Grunde scheint doch das Ganze nichts anderes sagen zu wollen, als dass der Mensch trotz aller Dummheiten und Verwirrungen, von einer höhern Hand geleitet, doch zum glücklichen Ziele gelange."[1]

This idea provides the thread on which the varicoloured pictures of the romance are strung; it is the history of a young man's apprenticeship to life. Wilhelm Meister is the son of a well-to-do merchant. Brought up as Goethe himself had been, his imagination nourished with poetry, Wilhelm prefers the theatre to the counting-house. When the novel opens, we find him in the toils of a pretty actress, Marianne, who incorporates his dreams of the theatre. From an actor, Melina, he learns, however, the dark side of theatrical life, and soon after, discovering that Marianne has been unfaithful to him, resolves to follow the advice of his practically minded friend, Werner, and to make the best of commercial life. He sets out on his travels as an agent for his father's business. Once more, however, the theatre proves too strong for him. He becomes attached to a wandering theatrical company, the members of which are characterised in a vividly realistic manner. Repelled rather than attracted by his new friends, Wilhelm makes a new tie for himself by purchasing Mignon, a child of thirteen, from a company of travelling acrobats whom he finds maltreating her. Mignon is the most ethereal of all Goethe's characters; she is rather an unearthly embodiment of primitive feelings, of love for country, and the all-absorbing sense of gratitude towards a benefactor, than a creature of flesh and blood; and with her is associated the mysterious Harper, whose spiritual gaze

Mignon.

[1] J. P. Eckermann, *Gespräche mit Goethe*, Leipzig, 1836-48, I, 194.

is fixed upon the past, and whose whole life was summed up in one brief period of happiness—two figures who, together with the wonderful lyrics that are placed on their lips, were alone sufficient to endear the novel to the young generation of Romantic writers growing up at Goethe's feet. In the meantime, Wilhelm himself becomes more and more deeply involved in the undertakings of the theatrical company with which he is connected. For a short time, indeed, he comes in contact with more aristocratic circles in the castle of a Graf who entertains the company; but here he only meets with disappointments. He becomes more and more confident that the ideal which he cannot find in everyday life is to be found in the unreal world of the theatre; and the works of Shakespeare, with which he now makes acquaintance, strengthen him in this conviction. The company of actors whose fortunes Meister controls, undertakes to produce *Hamlet*, and in the criticism and reflections which Goethe makes his characters express on this tragedy, he laid the foundation of the modern interpretation of Shakespeare. Wilhelm's connection with the theatre at least teaches him that his true vocation is not on the stage; the company deteriorates, and he leaves it to enter a new sphere of life. In order to bridge over the transition from Wilhelm Meister's theatrical experiences to those in the castle of Lothario, where we next find him, Goethe has inserted a book which he calls *Bekenntnisse einer schönen Seele*. These "confessions" of a noble pietistic lady, who rises through renunciation to a higher life, were based on some autobiographic sketches by a friend of Goethe's youth, Fräulein Katharina von Klettenberg, who, it will be remembered, had had considerable influence on the poet's religious convictions after he returned from Leipzig.

Bekenntnisse einer schönen Seele.

In Lothario's castle, Wilhelm enters upon the last stage of his apprenticeship. Not that his character, which has hitherto shown itself deficient in firmness and decision, is materially changed; but his convictions as to man's rights and duties become settled. His life, too, is given a new aim and a new meaning when he discovers that Marianne has left him a son; to this son's education he intends from now on to devote himself. As a lover, Wilhelm has throughout the book appeared in a most unsatisfactory light; and here, too, at the end, he

occupies an undignified position between Therese, with whom he falls in love at first sight, and Natalie, who, as the "schöne Amazone," had already played a romantic *rôle* in his life. Natalie, who turns out to be Lothario's sister, ultimately becomes Wilhelm's wife, while Lothario marries Aurelie. The closing chapters of the book stand in no very clear relation to the whole; the lying-in-state of the dead Mignon, in whom the Harper discovers his lost daughter, and the solemn ceremony by which Wilhelm's apprenticeship is declared at an end, are hardly in keeping with the realistic development of the earlier parts of the work. It is difficult to agree with Schlegel in regarding the two last books—the whole novel is divided into fifteen—as an artistic culmination: on the other hand, they are filled with Goethe's own philosophy of life, and contain the ethical kernel of the novel. The words which the four youths sing over Mignon's body—

"Schreitet, schreitet ins Leben zurück! Nehmet den heiligen Ernst mit hinaus; denn der Ernst, der heilige, macht allein das Leben zur Ewigkeit."[1]—

contain one of the great ideas which underlie *Wilhelm Meister;* the gospel it preaches might be expressed in the words, "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might." By learning to regard life and its duties earnestly, the hero advances from apprentice to master.

But, before Goethe had completed *Meister*, he had entered upon a new period in his life, the eleven years, from 1794 to 1805, during which he was bound by the closest ties of friendship to Schiller.

[1] Book 8, chap. 8.

CHAPTER XI.

THE CRITICAL PHILOSOPHY. GOETHE AND SCHILLER'S FRIENDSHIP.

After Goethe had returned from Italy and Schiller had settled permanently in Jena, German literature seemed, after its "Storm and Stress," at last to have arrived at a period of tranquillity. But the classic beauty of the one poet and the noble aspirations of the other might have made little impression on the intellectual life of the nation as a whole, had not other forces also been at work, foremost among which was the philosophy of Kant. This thinker first shook the German people out of their easy-going provincialism, and taught them to appreciate ideals of life and thought as yet undreamt-of in the philosophy of the eighteenth century.

Immanuel Kant (1724-1804),[1] the most powerful thinker of the modern world, was born and died in Königsberg; he began to teach at the university there in 1755, and in 1770 was made professor. The first outstanding work in which he embodied the principles of his philosophy, *Kritik* (*Critik*) *der reinen Vernunft*, appeared in 1781, the year of Lessing's death. This treatise laid the foundations of modern philosophy by destroying that dogmatism on the basis of first principles, which had formed an essential feature in all previous philosophic systems. In the place of dogmatic metaphysics, Kant set up a critical philosophy; he showed that the task which lay nearest to the philosopher was not to theorise on the unknown and the unknowable, but to investigate the

Immanuel Kant, 1724-1804.

Kritik der reinen Vernunft, 1781.

[1] *Sämmtliche Werke*, ed. G. Hartenstein, 8 vols. (in chronological order), Leipzig, 1867-69. Cp. K. Fischer, *Immanuel Kant und seine Lehre*, 4th ed., Heidelberg, 1897, and F. Paulsen, *Immanuel Kant, sein Leben und seine Lehre*, Stuttgart, 1898.

nature of the human mind. The *Kritik der reinen Vernunft* established irrefutably the fact that the universe is only known and only can be known to us through the medium of our senses — in other words, that absolute thinking, thinking without concrete ideas, is an impossibility. Setting out from this principle, Kant reduced reason, to which the older philosophies attributed an almost creative faculty, to its true proportions as a "regulative" function of the mind: it is that part of the mind through which the facts of experience have to pass in order to become knowledge. The nature, functions, and laws of human reason are the subject of Kant's first *Kritik*.

Kritik der praktischen Vernunft, 1788.

In 1788, his second important treatise, *Kritik der praktischen Vernunft*, appeared: it may be described as an application to the will of the same analytical method that had been employed in criticising "pure" reason. But in this treatise Kant was obliged to go much further afield; many first principles, such as the existence of God, immortality, above all, the freedom of the will, which the first *Kritik* had admitted to be possible, but avoided proving, are in the *Kritik der praktischen Vernunft* taken for granted, on the ground that morality is inconceivable without them. Thus the second *Kritik*, owing to the nature of its subject, does not stand on the unimpeachable, logical basis of the first, but it atones for this deficiency by the convincing earnestness with which the author lays down his principles. As a moral teacher, Kant's influence on his nation was enormous; his insistence upon duty for duty's sake, the religious awe which he inspired for the "eternal moral law" in the human soul and the categorical imperative which set obedience to that moral law above every other consideration, acted upon the German people like a tonic. From this time on, the laxities of the French encyclopedists, the Epicureanism of Wieland, the aggressive individualism of the "Stürmer und Dränger," lost all hold upon the higher life of the people. Kant laid the foundation upon which the Germans rose to be a powerful nation; and, in this sense, it is hardly an exaggeration to say that his philosophy was to Germany what the French Revolution was to France.

Kritik der Urtheilskraft, 1790.

The third of the *Kritiken* was that dealing with the *Urtheilskraft;* it was published in 1790, and contained Kant's

views on the critical functions of the mind, on the qualities inherent in objects which awake our admiration or the reverse; in other words, the *Kritik der Urtheilskraft* is Kant's chief contribution to æsthetics. In his later years he occupied himself much with political philosophy, and his writings on this subject betray the influence of the French Revolution: only one of these, *Zum ewigen Frieden* (1795), need be mentioned, a treatise in which the possibility of a free covenant between the nations is discussed.

It was not long before the stimulus of the critical philosophy showed itself in German thought. Herder, who had learned so much from Kant in his youth, was, as we have seen, roused to active and imbittered antagonism, while K. L. Reinhold (1758-1823), from 1787 on, Professor of Philosophy in Jena, helped to popularise the new doctrines in his *Briefe über die Kantsche Philosophie*, which appeared in Wieland's *Teutsche Merkur* in 1786 and 1787. After Reinhold left Jena for Kiel in 1794, his place was taken by Johann Gottlieb Fichte, a thinker who advanced German philosophy by another great stage.

K. L. Reinhold, 1758-1823.

None of the German poets of this age gave himself up more completely to the Kantian philosophy than Schiller, whose historical writings had already revealed an occasional trace of Kant's influence. In 1786 and 1788, Schiller published in the *Thalia* a number of *Philosophische Briefe* between two friends, that is to say, between himself and his friend Körner, and in these letters the latter appears as a confirmed Kantian, while the poet is still wrestling with the rationalism of the age. Schiller's interest in Kant had thus been stimulated by Körner, but he did not begin to study the new philosophy in earnest before March, 1791. The æsthetic side of Kant's philosophy attracted him first, and in the winter of 1792-93, in Jena, he delivered a course of lectures on this theme. He also about this time planned, in the form of a dialogue, an æsthetic treatise which was to have been entitled *Kallias*. In the first parts of his *Neue Thalia* (1792) he discussed the theory of tragedy according to the principles of Kant's æsthetics, and in 1793, *Über Anmuth und Würde* appeared. Two years later, it was followed by Schiller's most important work on æsthetics, the *Briefe über die ästhetische Erziehung des Menschen*, which

Schiller and Kant.

Schiller's writings on æsthetics.

was published in the early numbers of the *Horen*. These letters, however, had been written a year or two earlier as private letters to Schiller's patron, the Duke of Schleswig-Holstein-Augustenburg, who had generously granted him a pension of a thousand thalers for three years.

The problem which Schiller set himself in his æsthetic writings was the investigation of the nature of Beauty *per se*. Kant had only discussed the Beautiful in so far as it affects the subject, that is to say, the mind which appreciates it. Schiller asks if there is no quality in the object itself which determines whether it is beautiful or not, and finds his answer in Kant's quality of "self-determination" (*Selbstbestimmung*):—

"Diese grosse Idee der Selbstbestimmung," he says, "strahlt uns aus gewissen Erscheinungen der Natur zurück, und diese nennen wir Schönheit. . . . Die Freiheit in der Erscheinung ist also nichts anders, als die Selbstbestimmung an einem Dinge, insofern sie sich in der Anschauung offenbart."[1]

It was an easy matter for Schiller, who had thought so long and so earnestly on the relations of art and morality, to adapt to the moral life this conception, which regarded the Beautiful as something defined and governed by laws, but to all appearance free from the shackles of the law. The artistic side of his nature revolted from the unrelenting severity of Kant's ethics, and, while recognising the importance of Kant's stand against the moral laxity of the rationalistic philosophy, he believed that Kant had gone too far, and that his ethics would ultimately result in an abnegation of all art and grace. In place of stern categorical imperatives, Schiller, in *Anmuth und Würde*, sets up as the ideal of humanity, a life of beauty and dignity, which has risen, through obedience to law, to perfect moral freedom. "Anmuth," grace, beauty, art, on the one hand, "Würde," worth, dignity, sublimity on the other—these are the two geniuses which must lead us through life:—

"Zweyerley Genien sinds, die durch das Leben dich leiten,
Wohl dir, wenn sie vereint helfend zur Seite dir gehn!
Mit erheiterndem Spiel verkürzt dir der Eine die Reise,
Leichter an seinem Arm werden dir Schicksal und Pflicht.
Unter Scherz und Gespräch begleitet er biss an die Kluft dich,
Wo an der Ewigkeit Meer schaudernd der Sterbliche steht.

[1] Cp. Schiller's letters to Körner of Feb. 18 and 23, 1793 (F. Jonas, *Schillers Briefe*, 3, 254 ff.); also K. Berger, *Die Entwicklung von Schillers Ästhetik*, Weimar, 1894.

Hier empfängt dich entschlossen und ernst und schweigend der Andre,
Trägt mit gigantischem Arm über die Tiefe dich hin.
Nimmer widme dich Einem allein. Vertraue dem ersten
Deine Würde nicht an, nimmer dem andern dein Glück." [1]

With Schiller's philosophic studies, poetry always went hand in hand, and to his æsthetic speculations, his reflections on the relations of art and life, of beauty and morality, we owe the finest of his poems. Apart from the drama, Schiller's strength as a poet lies unquestionably in the philosophic lyric. Poems such as *Der Genius*, *Der Tanz*, *Die Würde der Frauen*, *Macht des Gesanges*, *Der Spaziergang* reproduce in ever-changing forms—now light and graceful, now swept along by a mighty rhetoric, or emphasised by an almost antique pathos—the thoughts that inspire *Über Anmut und Würde*. His highest achievements in this type of lyric are *Die Ideale* and *Das Ideal und das Leben* (originally entitled *Das Reich der Schatten*), the latter perhaps the noblest of all philosophic lyrics. Schiller here gives expression to the ideals of his own life, that rising up through the joy of sense to peace of soul, that realisation of the great humanitarian conception of moral freedom, of the perfect spiritualisation of life; for, to him, beauty and movement, art and life, are in their ultimate perfection inseparable. Not as a heaven-storming Prometheus of the "Sturm und Drang," but with that tranquillity of soul which is in harmony with law, Herakles, the type of aspiring humanity, rises in *Das Ideal und das Leben* to the pure realms of Olympus:—

Philosophic lyrics.

Das Ideal und das Leben, 1795.

"Biss der Gott des Irrdischen entkleidet,
Flammend sich vom Menschen scheidet,
Und des Äthers leichte Lüfte trinkt.
Froh des neuen ungewohnten Schwebens
Fliesst er aufwärts, und des Erdenlebens
Schweres Traumbild sinkt und sinkt und sinkt
Des Olympus Harmonien empfangen
Den Verklärten in Kronions Saal,
Und die Göttin mit den Rosenwangen
Reicht ihm lächelnd den Pokal." [2]

On sending this poem to Humboldt, Schiller wrote: "Wenn Sie diesen Brief erhalten, liebster Freund, so entfernen Sie

[1] *Schön und Erhaben* (*Werke*, II, 94).
[2] *Schriften*, II, 61.

alles, was profan ist, und lesen in geweyhter Stille dieses Gedicht."[1] And the impression left upon Humboldt did not belie its author's expectations.

K. W. von Humboldt, 1767-1835.

Of the new friends made by Schiller in Jena, none stood nearer to him than Humboldt, who had settled here in the beginning of 1794, expressly on Schiller's account. Karl Wilhelm von Humboldt (1767-1835)[2] was the elder brother of the more universally known traveller and scientist, F. H. Alexander von Humboldt (1769-1859), whose *Kosmos* (1845-58) remains one of the masterpieces of scientific literature. Wilhelm von Humboldt, a man of action rather than words, was one of the makers of modern Germany; as Prussian Minister of Education, he was virtually the founder of the new University of Berlin, which was inaugurated in 1810. To Humboldt more than to any other, Germany owed a practical realisation of the ideals of her classical poets and thinkers; he laid the basis for the higher education and culture of the nation. At this time he was an invaluable friend to Schiller; he shared the poet's philosophical enthusiasms, and aided and encouraged him in his quest in Greek literature for the highest form of poetry. Humboldt himself translated the *Agamemnon* of Æschylus (1816), and criticised *Hermann und Dorothea* (*Ästhetische Versuche*, 1799) with an understanding and sympathy which explain the confidence Goethe and Schiller placed in him. His most important work as a critic and scholar belongs to the field of comparative philology.

The German classical age is, as it were, summed up in the friendship of Goethe and Schiller; and E. Rietschel's noble statue of the two poets, which stands in front of the Ducal Theatre in Weimar, expresses admirably this supreme moment in the history of literature. The obstacles that stood in the way of an intimacy between the two poets have already been referred to: on Goethe's side, a reluctance to appreciate Schiller's good qualities; on Schiller's, a distrust which was made up half of dislike, half of jealousy. The deepest insight into Schiller's mind at this time is afforded by the last of his æsthetic writings, *Über naive und sentimentalische Dichtung*

Schiller's *Über naive und sentimentalische Dichtung*, 1795.

[1] Cp. *Briefwechsel zwischen Schiller und W. von Humboldt*, 2nd ed., Stuttgart, 1876-77 (F. Jonas, *Schillers Briefe*, 4, 232). For Humboldt's reply, see former work, p. 83.

[2] Cp. R. Haym, *W. von Humboldt*, Berlin, 1856.

(1795), which he himself characterised as a bridge from philosophic theory to poetic production.

Über naïve und sentimentalische Dichtung is a study of the fundamental nature of poetry. Schiller here investigates the conditions of poetic production and discovers two types of mind, the "naive" and the "sentimental," the latter word being used in its familiar eighteenth-century sense of "reflective" or "meditative." All primitive poetry, says Schiller, is naïve, that is to say, contains observation rather than reflection; the perfect examples of this class of poetry are to be found in Greek literature, above all, in Homer. But — and here one sees a certain kinship of Schiller's thought with that of Rousseau — this naïve quality is not only characteristic of primitive poets, it is also a mark of the highest genius, even in modern literatures. Shakespeare is a naïve poet, and so is Goethe. On the other hand, the bulk of modern poetry is "sentimental," that is to say, the modern poet prefers to reflect, to muse, to desire, instead of simply observing and giving artistic form to his observations. Of all Schiller's æsthetic writings, *Über naïve und sentimentalische Dichtung* had the deepest and most immediate influence on his contemporaries. But there was also a personal side to the treatise, which is important to a clear understanding of Schiller's own development. He had, as we have seen, become a warm admirer of Greek poetry; the naïve poetry of the ancients clearly represented to him the ideal of all poetry. The same quality of naïveté, he had also discerned in Goethe; but when he scrutinised himself and his own genius, he found that he was completely devoid of naïveté. The vital problem that now presented itself to him was, to discover reasons for the existence of a poet who had not this quality; by the side of the great poetry of antiquity, of a Shakespeare and a Goethe in modern literature, what room was there for his own writings? Following out this line of thought, he ultimately arrived at the conviction that he himself fulfilled the conditions of a purely modern or "sentimental" poet.

Friendship with Goethe.

Having thus justified his work beside Goethe's, there was no further obstacle on Schiller's side to a closer intimacy, and the first step towards a better understanding was made by him. On the 13th of June, 1794, he wrote to Goethe the

letter which opens the correspondence between the two poets,[1] asking him to take an active part in the editorship of a new journal, *Die Horen* (1795-97), which he was about to publish. Goethe agreed, and in the course of a few weeks both poets had discovered a surprising agreement in their views of life and poetry; both had reason to regret that it had taken so long for them to come to an understanding with each other. *Die Horen*, however, proved little more successful than Schiller's previous journals. His own contributions, such as the *Briefe über die ästhetische Erziehung des Menschen* (1795), and the *Merkwürdige Belagerung von Antwerpen* (1795), were hardly likely to make the journal popular, while Goethe's contributions allowed of no comparison with *Wilhelm Meister*, which at this time was being published as the last volumes of his collected works. And what came from other contributors, from Herder, Fichte, Meyer and the Schlegels, did not materially raise the level of the journal. To the *Horen*, Goethe contributed the *Römischen Elegien* (1795) and the *Unterhaltungen deutscher Ausgewanderten* (1795), a collection of stories which add nothing to his prestige as a novelist, although they help us to appreciate his attitude towards the French Revolution. *Benvenuto Cellini* (1796-97), which began to appear in the sixth volume of the journal, was but a translation of Cellini's own biography.

Die Horen, 1795-97.

The failure of the *Horen* stung Goethe and Schiller to retaliate on the writers of the day, whom they held responsible for the bad taste of the public. Their retaliation took the form of a collection of distichs, to which, in imitation of Martial, they gave the title, *Xenien*. There is hardly another incident in the history of German literature which it is so difficult for us to understand as the "Xenienkampf," which followed the publication of the *Xenien* in Schiller's *Musenalmanach* for 1796. The satire of these distichs, like all purely literary satire, has lost its virulence, and much which, in its day, had power to sting, even to wound, now seems harmless. But the *Xenien* were an effective protest against mediocrity; the cavilling criticism which the minor coteries of Berlin and Leipzig had directed against Goethe and Schiller was,

The *Xenien*, 1796.

[1] Ed. W. Vollmer, 3rd ed., Stuttgart, 1881. Cp. for the following, the introduction to my edition of *Selections from the Correspondence between Schiller and Goethe*, Boston, 1898.

for a time at least, silenced; the air was cleared, and both poets felt it incumbent on them to follow up their victory with "some great and worthy work of art." The immediate results of this resolution were *Wallenstein* and *Hermann und Dorothea*.

Wallenstein, 1798-99.

The plan of *Wallenstein* had been sketched out as early as 1791, before the *Geschichte des dreissigjährigen Krieges* was concluded. The drama is not mentioned again in Schiller's correspondence until 1794, when a couple of months seem to have been devoted to it. Once more, however, it was thrown aside and not resumed until 1796, when, under the stimulus of Goethe's encouragement, Schiller began to work steadily at it. Thus the composition of *Wallenstein* extends over the momentous period of its author's development, in which he passed from utilitarian rationalism to Kantian idealism.[1] More than any other of his dramas, *Wallenstein* shows traces of the poet's intellectual growth, the transition in his interests from history to philosophy, and from philosophy to poetry. In his original plan, Schiller probably had in view a tragedy similar to *Don Carlos*, depending merely on intrigue for its interest. As it now stands, it is the most monumental of all his works, and the ripest historical tragedy in the literature of the eighteenth century.

Although nominally consisting of three plays, *Wallenstein* is not a trilogy in the accepted sense of that word. In its earliest form it was only one play, and it is still best regarded as a tragedy in ten acts, preceded by a "Vorspiel." This "Vorspiel," *Wallensteins Lager*, paints the "finstern Zeitgrund" of the tragedy; it presents a living panorama of the motley elements that make up the camp before Pilsen:—

Wallensteins Lager, 1798.

> "In den kühnen Schaaren,
> Die sein Befehl gewaltig lenkt, sein Geist
> Beseelt, wird euch sein Schattenbild begegnen. . . .
> Denn seine Macht ist's, die sein Herz verführt,
> Sein Lager nur erkläret sein Verbrechen."

The forces which are to play so great a part in the tragedy itself are here foreshadowed in the rough soldiers of Wallenstein's army; the camp, as it is described in this finely

[1] Cp. E. Kühnemann, *Die Kantischen Studien Schillers und die Komposition des Wallenstein*, Marburg, 1889, and K. Werder, *Vorlesungen über Schillers Wallenstein*, Berlin, 1889.

conceived introduction, is the background, or, to use the phrase of modern criticism, the *milieu* of the drama. And against this background rises, in the two chief dramas, the figure of Wallenstein:—

"der Schöpfer kühner Heere,
Des Lagers Abgott und der Länder Geissel,
Die Stütze und der Schrecken seines Kaisers,
Des Glückes abentheuerlicher Sohn,
Der von der Zeiten Gunst emporgetragen,
Der Ehre höchste Staffeln rasch erstieg
Und ungesättigt immer weiter strebend,
Der unbezähmten Ehrsucht Opfer fiel.
Von der Partheyen Gunst und Hass verwirrt
Schwankt sein Charakterbild in der Geschichte,
Doch euren Augen soll ihn jetzt die Kunst,
Auch eurem Herzen menschlich näher bringen.
Denn jedes Äusserste führt sie, die alles
Begrenzt und bindet, zur Natur zurück,
Sie sieht den Menschen in des Lebens Drang
Und wälzt die grössre Hälfte seiner Schuld
Den unglückseligen Gestirnen zu."

These words from the *Prolog*,[1] which Schiller wrote for the first performance of *Wallensteins Lager*, show how the poet intended his hero's character to be understood. At the beginning of *Die Piccolomini*, the first of the two dramas which constitute the tragedy proper, Wallenstein is at the highest point of his career, and his ambitions are set on the crown of Bohemia and on seeing himself the chief power in Germany. To attain this end, he trusts, in the first place, to the army which he has himself created. But this is not enough; to turn the balance of power, he must enter into an alliance with the Protestant Swedes, the enemies of his emperor. Before, however, taking this traitorous step, he awaits the decision of the stars. Field-Marshal Illo and Graf Terzky, Wallenstein's brother-in-law, impatient of delay, endeavour to stimulate him to action. At a banquet they obtain, under false pretences, the signatures of the half-intoxicated generals to a document, in which the latter declare their intention to remain faithful to their leader, even though he prove a traitor to the emperor. One of these generals, Octavio Piccolomini, an Italian, and the friend in whom Wallenstein places most reliance, is not blind to the treason the latter meditates, but he is in no hurry to act. He possesses the

Die Piccolomini, 1799.

[1] *Schriften*, 12, 5 ff.

sign-manual of the emperor, which empowers him to depose Wallenstein and himself assume the leadership of the forces. Octavio's son, Max Piccolomini, on the other hand, clings to his leader with the enthusiasm of a youthful hero-worship; moreover, he loves Wallenstein's daughter, Thekla, and, in spite of his father's warning, will not believe in Wallenstein's treason. Even the report that the latter's envoy to the Swedes has been captured and his plot discovered, does not convince the younger Piccolomini. He will only believe that Wallenstein is a traitor when he hears it from his own lips :—

> " Rein muss es bleiben zwischen mir und ihm,
> Und eh' der Tag sich neigt, muss sich's erklären,
> Ob ich den Freund, ob ich den Vater soll entbehren." [1]

With these words, the first part of the tragedy ends.

If *Die Piccolomini*, regarded for itself, suffers from the fact that it only leads up to events which take place in the sequel, *Wallensteins Tod* is almost overweighted with the fulness of its dramatic action. In this play, Schiller reveals himself for the first time as a tragic poet of the highest order. The network with which Wallenstein is surrounded is closing fast upon him. The documents that prove his treason are in the hands of his enemies, and an interview with Wrangel, a Swedish colonel, forces him to act. He throws in his lot with the Swedes. On Octavio, whom he still blindly trusts, he places responsibilities with which the Italian naturally strengthens his own hand. Regiment after regiment breaks away from him and declares anew its allegiance to the emperor. Wallenstein at last stands alone, a figure of tragic grandeur :—

Wallensteins Tod 1799.

> " Es ist entschieden, nun ist's gut—und schnell
> Bin ich geheilt von allen Zweifelsqualen,
> Die Brust ist wieder frey, der Geist ist hell,
> Nacht muss es seyn, wo Friedlands Sterne strahlen.
> Mit zögerndem Entschluss, mit wankendem Gemüth
> Zog ich das Schwert, ich that's mit Widerstreben,
> Da es in meine Wahl noch war gegeben!
> Nothwendigkeit ist da, der Zweifel flieht,
> Jetzt fecht' ich für mein Haupt und für mein Leben." [2]

Nemesis follows fast on Wallenstein's heels. The hardest blow of all is when he learns that Max Piccolomini has

[1] Act 5, sc. 3 (*Werke*, 12, 198).
[2] Act 3, sc. 10 (*Werke*, 12, 292).

deserted him. Escaping with the followers he still believes faithful to him, Wallenstein reaches Eger, where Illo, Terzky, and he are murdered by Buttler, a friend he has been too blind to distrust. The tragedy closes—a fine touch of irony—with the arrival of a messenger from the emperor, conferring upon Octavio the title "Fürst."

At the time Schiller was completing *Wallenstein*, a favourite subject of discussion between himself and Goethe was, as is to be seen from the correspondence of the two poets, the difference between the Greek ideals of literature and those of modern literature. The practical problem which each tacitly set himself was how he might best combine the excellences of Greek and modern poetry, and the trilogy of *Wallenstein*, as Hettner has pointed out,[1] was Schiller's answer to this problem. The tragedy of Wallenstein's life is only partially due to his own fault—his overweening ambition on the one hand, his blindness and irresolution on the other; the poet makes us at the same time share his hero's faith in the "unglückselige Gestirne," which forms so fine a poetic motive in the play. The irresistible movement of events makes the catastrophe inevitable from the beginning; for, as Schiller says in the *Geschichte des dreissigjährigen Krieges*, "Wallenstein fiel, nicht weil er Rebell war, sondern er rebellirte, weil er fiel."[2] Masterly, above all, is the art with which Schiller has moulded the historical Wallenstein—properly, Waldstein—into a tragic hero of the first order; our sympathies for the hero are never allowed to waver, even although he stands throughout the drama in the shadow of treason. With his firm conviction that he is born to greatness, his belief in a higher power that leads him, Wallenstein becomes in his fall a tragic figure, worthy of a place beside Œdipus or Lear. Goethe had undoubtedly this mastery of characterisation in his mind, when he said, "Schillers *Wallenstein* ist so gross, dass in seiner Art zum zweyten Mal nicht etwas Ähnliches mehr vorhanden ist."[3]

Not alone Wallenstein himself, but also the other actors in the tragedy, above all, Buttler, Terzky, Illo, and Octavio, are

[1] *Literaturgeschichte des achtzehnten Jahrhunderts*, 4th ed., Brunswick, 1894, 3, 3, 2, 247; cp., however, L. Bellermann, *Schillers Dramen*, Berlin, 1888-91, 2, 55 ff.

[2] *Werke*, 8, 353.

[3] J. P. Eckermann, *Gespräche mit Goethe* (July 23, 1827), 1, 381.

a marked advance on the characters of Schiller's earlier plays; they are drawn with more delicate lines. The least convincing of the male figures is Max Piccolomini, the youthful idealist, who provides a foil to the realist, Wallenstein; the poet's art is nowhere more of the eighteenth century than in these unreal embodiments of youth which, from this time on, appear with little variation in all his plays. Of the female figures of the drama there is little to say; the best of them is Terzky's wife, in whom Schiller perfected the type of heroine he had already drawn in Lady Milford and the Princess Eboli. Wallenstein's daughter Thekla, on the other hand, like her lover Max Piccolomini, seems a somewhat incongruous figure in a tragedy with such enormous political issues; but, like the love episodes in the French classical drama, the scenes between Max and Thekla are rather a concession to the taste of the time than an integral part of the whole.

CHAPTER XII.

GOETHE'S CLASSICISM; THE FIRST PART OF *FAUST*.

THE trilogy of *Wallenstein* was Schiller's practical solution of the problem which the two poets set themselves, namely, to reconcile the literary art of the Greeks with that of the modern world; the answer which Goethe offered was *Hermann und Dorothea* (1798; virtually October, 1797). While Schiller endeavoured to combine the dramaturgic principles of ancient tragedy with those of Shakespeare, Goethe, in *Hermann und Dorothea*, aimed at creating a modern epic, which should be suffused with the spirit of Homer. The model for the poem was, of course, in the first instance, Voss's *Luise*, and like *Luise*, *Hermann und Dorothea* is written in those classical hexameters which Voss adapted to German requirements. Goethe's epic is founded upon an incident said to have happened more than sixty years before the poet's time, at Altmühl, near Öttingen, in Bavaria, where the son of a well-to-do family found his bride among a party of emigrants from Salzburg. Goethe made use of the anecdote in its general outlines, modernised it, and gave it, as background, the stormy sky of the French Revolution; the scene is a German village on the right bank of the Rhine, and his emigrants come from France. Hermann, son of the host of the "Golden Lion," is sent by his mother with linen and provisions to assist the fugitives. Overtaking them, he finds Dorothea leading a bullock-cart, in which lies a woman who has just given birth to a child. He at once feels an instinctive admiration for Dorothea, and places his provisions in her hands, confident that she will distribute them wisely. Hermann's father now finds him no longer unwilling to think of marriage, and expects his son to

Goethe's *Hermann und Dorothea*, 1798.

choose a bride with a dowry, or, at least, one of higher rank than a peasant. This naturally comes as a blow to the young man's hopes, but his mother wins his confidence, and bids him tell his father all. The host of the "Golden Lion" hears of the emigrant-girl in silence; the pastor, however, takes Hermann's part, and the apothecary, who is more wary, suggests that he and the pastor should first make inquiries about Dorothea. Hermann's father agrees to place no obstacle in the way of a marriage, should the two friends be satisfied with what they hear. The accounts they bring home are favourable, and Hermann awaits Dorothea at the well. He cannot, however, bring himself to speak of love:—

"ihr Auge blickte nicht Liebe,
Aber hellen Verstand, und gebot verständig zu reden."

So he tells her that his mother wishes to have some one in the house to help her and to take the place of a daughter she has lost. Will Dorothea accept the position? The homeless girl is glad to become, as she believes, a servant in the "Golden Lion." But now she must return, for—

"Die Mädchen
Werden immer getadelt, die lange beym Brunnen verweilen;
Und doch ist es am rinnenden Quell so lieblich zu schwätzen.
Also standen sie auf und schauten Beide noch einmal
In den Brunnen zurück, und süsses Verlangen ergriff sie.

Schweigend nahm sie darauf die beiden Krüge beym Henkel,
Stieg die Stufen hinan, und Hermann folgte der Lieben.
Einen Krug verlangt er von ihr, die Bürde zu theilen.
Lasst ihn, sprach sie; es trägt sich besser die gleichere Last so.
Und der Herr, der künftig befiehlt, er soll mir nicht dienen.
Seht mich so ernst nicht an, als wäre mein Schicksal bedenklich!
Dienen lerne bey Zeiten das Weib nach ihrer Bestimmung;
Denn durch Dienen allein gelangt sie endlich zum Herrschen,
Zu der verdienten Gewalt, die doch ihr im Hause gehöret.
Dienet die Schwester dem Bruder doch früh, sie dienet den Eltern,
Und ihr Leben ist immer ein ewiges Gehen und Kommen,
Oder ein Heben und Tragen, Bereiten und Schaffen für Andre."[1]

Amidst affectionate embraces and the tears of the children, Dorothea takes leave of her friends, and, as the night approaches, returns with Hermann to the village. He shows her his father's house lying in the moonlight and the window

[1] Canto 7 ("Erato"), 51 f., and 103 ff. (*Werke*, 50, 246 ff.)

that is to be hers, and as they make their way down the rough path, her foot slips and, for a moment, she rests in his arms. At length the house is reached, and Hermann's father, believing all to be settled, welcomes Dorothea by complimenting her on her choice of his son. Dorothea is confused; after such a greeting, it is impossible for her to remain. A word from Hermann, however, explains everything, and the dowerless stranger is warmly received as the future mistress of the "Golden Lion."

It would be difficult to find a better illustration than *Hermann und Dorothea* of Goethe's dictum that there is poetry in everything, if the poet only knows how to bring it to light. Goethe has here taken a commonplace subject and treated it in the Homeric manner, without for a moment leaving the impression that the means used are out of proportion to the end. Over the whole poem lies a calm, classic objectivity; the characters — the Host of the Lion, the apothecary, the pastor, Hermann's mother—are not drawn with the sharp individuality of Götz or Werther; they are not exceptions, but universal types of human life. Hermann is the young German burgher who stands as an example of his class; Dorothea, the emigrant, is an embodiment of the restless, unsettled life for which the French Revolution was responsible, wherever its influence made itself felt. Thus, although the scenes and incidents of *Hermann und Dorothea* are provincial, we never forget the wider issues of human life and society, which lie behind the poem.[1]

Epic plans.

After *Hermann und Dorothea*, Goethe sought other themes that would admit of epic treatment. From the year 1797 date various schemes, *Die Jagd*, *Tell*, and *Die Achilleis*—the latter an attempt both to be Homeric in spirit and to meet Homer on his own ground—but not more than two cantos were written, while the other two poems were only planned. A more fruitful side of Goethe's activity, as of Schiller's, in 1797, was the ballad-poetry which both contributed in such profusion to the *Musenalmanach für* 1798. In the summer of 1797 Goethe wrote two of the finest of his ballads, *Der Zauberlehrling* and *Der Gott und die Bayadere;* to this year, too, belong *Die Braut von Korinth* and the cycle of ballads known as *Die Schöne Müllerin*, the fresh, natural tone of

The "Balladenalmanach," 1798.

[1] Cp. V. Hehn, *Über Goethes Hermann und Dorothea*, Stuttgart, 1893.

which forms a contrast to the rapidly stiffening classicism of Goethe's epic and dramatic poetry.

Schiller's contributions to the "Balladenalmanach" show a most striking advance on his former work: we have only, indeed, to compare the lyrics and ballads he wrote at this time with those he had published in the earlier Almanachs for 1796 and 1797, to see how beneficial Goethe's friendship had been to the younger poet. The purely sensuous and lyric mood which Goethe knew so well how to conjure up, lay, it is true, beyond Schiller's reach, but the new ballads testify to a remarkable plastic and dramatic power, while the metaphysical has to a large extent given way to the concrete. *Der Taucher*, *Der Handschuh*, *Die Bürgschaft*, and *Der Kampf mit dem Drachen* are not without a moralising tendency, but the narrative has now the chief place. Another group of ballads which Schiller wrote in these years, stands in intimate relation to his classical studies. The chief poems of this group, *Der Ring des Polykrates*, *Die Kraniche des Ibykus*, and *Der Gang nach dem Eisenhammer*, are based on the Greek conception of destiny; and in the lyric poems, such as *Die Begegnung*, *Das Geheimniss*, *Die Erwartung*, the classical influence is also the dominant one. But the crown of Schiller's non-dramatic poetry is unquestionably *Das Lied von der Glocke*, which was completed in September, 1799. The motto of this poem, which in successive scenes describes the making of a bell, is the full-sounding inscription, "Vivos voco, Mortuos plango, Fulgura frango," engraven on the Minster bell at Schaffhausen. The master and his apprentices watch over the molten metal, free it from all impurities, and pour it into the mould, from which the bell ultimately emerges to be hoisted into the tower and to ring out "Peace" to men; and as the work proceeds, Schiller follows in reflection "des Lebens wechselvolles Spiel." Thus the *Lied von der Glocke* becomes, as it were, an epitome of human life, its joys and its sorrows.

Das Lied von der Glocke, 1799.

The portion of Goethe's life which lay between the publication of *Hermann und Dorothea* and that of *Faust* in 1808, was by no means so productive as were the last six years of his friend's, to which we shall return in the next chapter; but what he did write was significant. With the *Achilleis*, he had discovered that to the imitation of classical models there was

a limit which the modern poet is obliged to respect; but the "Festspiele" which he composed for the Weimar theatre, *Paläophron und Neoterpe* (1800), an allegory of the meeting between the new time and the old, *Was wir bringen* (1802), and the *Vorspiel zur Eröffnung des Weimarischen Theaters*, in September, 1807, over which the figure of Napoleon throws its shadow, are all cast in forbiddingly classical moulds. More in accordance with the taste of the time was the historical tragedy, *Die natürliche Tochter* (1804), completed in the spring of 1803. Goethe had found the theme in the Memoirs, which were published in 1798, of Princess Stephanie Louise de Bourbon-Conti, and his original intention was to write a trilogy which should embody the spirit of the French Revolution, as *Wallenstein* had expressed that of the Thirty Years' War; but he did not get beyond the first drama. In the *Natürliche Tochter*, Eugenie's illegitimate birth throws a shadow on her life; it excludes her from the position to which her father's rank and her own education entitle her. She is placed at the mercy of political intrigue and party strife, and in the end her life is only saved by her faithful Hofmeisterin, who secretly removes her from the scene of her trials. *Die natürliche Tochter* was intended as a prologue to the real drama of the Revolution, which the poet had in view; but before he was ready to write this sequel, the Revolution had passed away, and, to some extent, Goethe's own antagonism to it. Of all his more important works, *Die natürliche Tochter* is the most difficult to understand, by reason of its uncompromising classicism; in his striving after complete objectivity, Goethe has not even named his characters; the heroine alone is an exception, the others being simply "the king," "the duke," and so on. In its classical smoothness the drama has not unjustly been compared with marble; the calm impersonal tone of its poetry is almost statuesque. But the comparison is only partially true; there is neither coldness nor want of colour in the *Natürliche Tochter*, and the chief actors at least are drawn with clear if delicate lines. Moreover, Goethe was too great a poet to allow purely political ideas to obscure the human interest of the action.

Goethe's "Festspiele."

Die natürliche Tochter, 1804.

Goethe and the French Revolution.

Besides its reflection in the *Natürliche Tochter*, Goethe's attitude to the French Revolution is to be inferred from a

number of minor writings from the last decade of the century. The subject of *Der Gross-Cophta* (1791), for instance, is the famous diamond necklace, Cagliostro being the hero, but both it and the comedy of *Der Bürgergeneral* (1793) are trivial satires on the ideas of the Revolution. The unfinished plays, *Die Aufgeregten* (1793) and *Das Mädchen von Oberkirch* (1794), treat the political movement of the age in a more serious spirit, while *Die Reise der Söhne Megaprazons*, written about the same time, is the fragment of a satirical novel. From such works it is clear that Goethe regarded the French Revolution neither as a just retribution for the wrongs committed by one class of society against the social order nor as an act of liberation; essentially an aristocrat, he saw in it only the triumph of the rabble.

Pandora, 1810.

The most abstruse and enigmatical of Goethe's classical poems is the allegorical tragedy *Pandora* (1810), which was written between 1806 and 1809. This fragment, for it also is incomplete, contains, however, some of Goethe's finest poetry. In the characters of Prometheus and Epimetheus, idealist is opposed to realist as, twenty years before, Tasso had been contrasted with Antonio, but so intent is the poet on enforcing his allegory that the personalities of his characters are obliterated. The figures of *Pandora* are not living personages, but merely shadowy personifications of ideas. Pandora herself is Beauty, and she falls to the lot, not of the practical Prometheus, but of the idealist Epimetheus; Epimetheus, however, is obliged to renounce his wild passion, and to approach her in faith and humility. Goethe's classicism was not restricted to his poetry; it appeared, as will be seen in the next chapter, in the method in which he directed the Weimar theatre, and in his writings upon art. Between 1798 and 1800, he published, in collaboration with the art-historian Heinrich Meyer (1760-1832), who, in these years, was his most intimate friend, a review, *Die Propyläen*, the ruling idea of which was that classic art, as rediscovered by Winckelmann, was the only true art. Goethe's volume on *Winckelmann und seine Zeit* (1805) was his most immediate and personal stand against the new Romantic principles which had begun to revolutionise painting and sculpture.

Writings on art.

But all these attempts to champion a dying æsthetic principle sink into nothing beside the publication (1808) in the

Faust, erster Theil, 1808.

new edition of his *Werke* (12 vols., Stuttgart, 1806-1808) of the First Part of *Faust*. We have already considered this drama in the first fragmentary form which Goethe gave it in Frankfort, during his period of "Sturm und Drang." We have seen, too, how, in 1790, he revised and published the fragment with some additional scenes, and also with some unfinished scenes omitted. Now, for the first time, *Faust* appeared as a complete poem; since 1800, moreover, Goethe had also been at work on an episode—*Helena*—which was ultimately to form the poetic centre of the Second Part. The First Part of Faust[1] benefited perhaps to a greater extent than any other of his works from his friendship with Schiller. It might even be said that in these years the idea of *Faust* as a world-poem, as a tragedy mirroring the life of mankind, first took clear and definite shape. *Faust* ceased to be the tragedy of a single life and became the *Divine Comedy* of humanity, as conceived by the eighteenth century in its highest imaginative flight. The change is to be seen at once in the three introductory Prologues, which place the poem in an entirely new perspective. Each of these poems is an example of Goethe's art in its purest form. The elegiac *Zueignung*, through which the past echoes and "murmurs with its many voices," binds *Faust* with the poet's youth; the *Vorspiel auf dem Theater*—modelled on the prologue to the Indian drama, *Sakuntala*, which G. Forster translated from the English in 1791—with its unsurpassable characterisation of the three forces in all dramatic art, here represented by the Theatre Director, the Poet, and the "lustige Person," forms the link between the play and the stage; while the organ-roll of the *Prolog im Himmel* brings the poem into touch with the spiritual problems of Goethe's own life and of humanity at large. Thus, what was once a puppet play, then a tragedy of the "Sturm und Drang," here becomes a modern mystery, in which the spectator is carried "vom Himmel durch die Welt zu Hölle." The *Prolog im Himmel*, suggested by the Hebrew poem of *Job*, gives the key to *Faust* as Goethe finally conceived the drama. Mephistopheles extorts from

The Prologues.

[1] Editions by G. von Loeper, 2 vols., Berlin, 1879, and K. J. Schröer, 2 vols., 3rd and 4th ed., Leipzig, 1896-98. Of recent works on Goethe's *Faust* the most important are O. Pniower's *Goethes Faust, Zeugnisse und Excurse zu seiner Entstehungsgeschichte*, Berlin, 1899, and J. Minor's *Goethes Faust, Entstehungsgeschichte und Erklärung*, 2 vols., Stuttgart, 1901.

God the permission to tempt Faust from the path of earnest endeavour. "Nun gut," says the Lord:—

> "Nun gut, es sey dir überlassen!
> Zieh diesen Geist von seinem Urquell ab,
> Und führ' ihn, kannst du ihn erfassen,
> Auf deinem Wege mit herab,
> Und steh' beschämt, wenn du bekennen musst:
> Ein guter Mensch in seinem dunkeln Drange,
> Ist sich des rechten Weges wohl bewusst."[1]

The Mephistopheles that makes the wager with God is no longer the traditional devil of the Volksbuch, who had been sufficient for the poet's needs in his "Sturm und Drang"; Mephistopheles has now become a spirit akin to the "Erdgeist," and embodies the idea of negation in Goethe's cosmogony. He is "der Geist, der stets verneint,"

> "ein Theil von jener Kraft,
> Die stets das Böse will und stets das Gute schafft."[2]

The first scene of the drama plays in the "high-arched, narrow, Gothic chamber" of the original play, and, until after the scene with Wagner, the drama practically remains as it was. But when his famulus has left Faust, the thought of his own littleness, compared with the all-powerful "Erdgeist," drives him to despair. Death alone can solve all problems; he takes down the phial that will bring relief, but, as the poison touches his lips, the Easter bells ring out and the angels sing of the Risen Christ. Memories of childhood rise before Faust; he puts the poison aside.

> "Erinnrung hält mich nun mit kindlichem Gefühle
> Vom letzten, ernsten Schritt zurück.
> O! tönet fort ihr süssen Himmelslieder!
> Die Thräne quillt, die Erde hat mich wieder!"[3]

"Vor dem Thor."

And now Faust goes out into the world; we see him, accompanied by his famulus, passing through the crowds of happy, careless townsfolk before the gates. Here, the life and the sunshine bring home to him the tragedy of his own existence with redoubled force. How happy, beside him, is the pedantic Wagner, whose thoughts do not rise above his books.

[1] *Prolog im Himmel*, ll. 323 ff. (*Werke*, 22).
[2] *Studirzimmer*, ll. 1335 f., 1338 (*l.c.*, 14, 67).
[3] *Nacht*, ll. 781 ff. (p. 43).

"Zwey Seelen wohnen, ach! in meiner Brust,
Die eine will sich von der andern trennen;
Die eine hält, in derber Liebeslust,
Sich an die Welt mit klammernden Organen;
Die andre hebt gewaltsam sich vom Dust,
Zu den Gefilden hoher Ahnen."[1]

The scene closes with the appearance of the mysterious black poodle which follows Faust and Wagner home.

When we see Faust again, he is in his study; opening the New Testament, he tries to find the simple faith of his childhood, but for him the beginning is no longer the "Word," but the "Deed." And now Mephistopheles, in the guise of a wandering scholar, steps forth from behind the stove; he had been the mysterious poodle of the previous scene. To ingratiate himself with Faust, Mephistopheles gives the latter a foretaste of his power by conjuring up before him a vision of the joys of sense, for which one of "the two souls" within Faust's breast yearns. Upon this episode follows the magnificent scene in which Faust seals his pact with Mephistopheles. Faust, the Faust who, in the bitterness of his despair, has cursed all that is beautiful in life, destroying, as the spirits that hover over him, sing—

"Die schöne Welt
Mit mächtiger Faust;
Sie stürzt, sie zerfällt!
Ein Halbgott hat sie zerschlagen!"[2]

is now prepared for everything. Mephistopheles unfolds his conditions:—

"Ich will mich hier zu deinem Dienst verbinden,
Auf deinen Wink nicht rasten und nicht ruhn;
Wenn wir uns drüben wieder finden,
So sollst du mir das Gleiche thun."

The pact.

But the "drüben" troubles Faust little: Mephistopheles promises to give him what no man has yet seen; he will lay at his feet all that the soul can desire—fine living, gold, women, honour. The one condition which Faust makes is that only when Mephistopheles can satisfy him, can still his yearnings and blot out his ambitions, only then will he fall into his tempter's power.

[1] *Vor dem Thor*, ll. 1112 ff. (p. 57).
[2] *Studirzimmer*, ll. 1609 ff. (p. 78).

" Werd' ich beruhigt je mich auf ein Faulbett legen,
So sey es gleich um mich gethan !
Kannst du mich schmeichelnd je belügen,
Dass ich mir selbst gefallen mag,
Kannst du mich mit Genuss betrügen :
Das sey für mich der letzte Tag !
Die Wette biet' ich !
Mephistopheles. Top !
Faust. Und Schlag auf Schlag !
Werd' ich zum Augenblicke sagen :
Verweile doch ! du bist so schön !
Dann magst du mich in Fesseln schlagen,
Dann will ich gern zu Grunde gehn !
Dann mag die Todtenglocke schallen,
Dann bist du deines Dienstes frey,
Die Uhr mag stehn, der Zeiger fallen,
Es sey die Zeit für mich vorbey ! "[1]

Thus Faust's enjoyment of Mephistopheles's service is not, as in the older versions of the story, limited to a certain period of years; it depends wholly on the insatiability of Faust's nature. The pact is signed with Faust's blood.

From now on, the drama is mainly the *Faust* we already know. First comes the scene between Mephistopheles and the student, then that in "Auerbach's Keller." The "Hexenküche," in which Faust drinks the potion which rejuvenates him, and awakens his earthly desires, was written, as we have seen, at Rome in 1788. The scenes where Gretchen appears were least altered in the final version of the drama; only that with Valentin, which, in the first sketch, was a mere fragment, is here completed. The scene "Wald und Höhle," where we are shown the invigorating effects of the magic potion on Faust's whole nature, has already been noticed as the chief addition to the first published fragment of 1790. In the breathless haste with which the tragedy rushes to its close, Goethe saw the necessity of some pause or break; Mephistopheles accordingly makes one more attempt to distract Faust and cause him to forget Gretchen, by plunging him into the whirlpool of excitement on the Brocken, where the witches assemble on the last night of April. This is the poetic justification of the "Walpurgisnacht." But, grandiose as this scene is, there is an occasional note of cynicism in it, which reminds the reader that Goethe had outgrown the unfettered mood, the spirit of "Sturm und Drang," in

The "Walpurgisnacht."

[1] *Studirzimmer*, ll. 1656 ff. and 1692 ff. (p. 80 ff.)

which he had originally conceived *Faust*. The satirical Intermezzo, *Oberons und Titanias goldne Hochzeit*, has no organic connection with the drama, and may be left out of consideration. The tragedy closes with the three magnificent scenes of the original play, "Trüber Tag," "Nacht," and "Kerker"; here the alterations are mainly alterations in form, for in the earliest *Faust* all three scenes were in prose. But it is also possible to see how Goethe's naturalism gave place to a higher spirituality; the intensity of Gretchen's tragedy is not lessened, but it stands out from a less actual background. Here, for instance, is the close of the drama, side by side with that of the early Frankfort version :—

URFAUST.

"*Faust.* Der Tag graut. O Liebgen! Liebgen!

Margarete. Tag! Es wird Tag! Der lezte Tag! Der Hochzeit Tag! Sags niemand dass du die Nacht vorher bey Gretgen warst. Mein Kränzgen! Wir sehn uns wieder! Hörst du die Bürger schlürpfen nur über die Gassen! Hörst du! Kein lautes Wort. Die Glocke ruft! Krack das Stäbgen bricht! Es zuckt in iedem Nacken die Schärfe die nach meinem zuckt! Die Glocke hör

Mephistopheles (*erscheint*). Auf oder ihr seyd verlohren, meine Pferde schaudern, der Morgen dämmert auf.

Margarete. Der! der! Las ihn schick ihn fort! der will mich! Nein! Nein! Gericht Gottes kom über mich, dein bin ich! rette mich! Nimmer nimmermehr! Auf ewig lebe wohl. Leb wohl Heinrich.

ERSTER THEIL.

"*Faust.* Der Tag graut! Liebchen! Liebchen!

Margarete. Tag! Ja es wird Tag!
der letzte Tag dringt herein;
Mein Hochzeittag sollt' es seyn!
Sag niemand dass du schon bey
Gretchen warst.
Weh meinem Kranze!
Es ist eben geschehn!
Wir werden uns wiedersehn;
Aber nicht beym Tanze.
Die Menge drängt sich, man hört
sie nicht.
Der Platz, die Gassen
Können sie nicht fassen.
Die Glocke ruft, das Stäbchen
bricht.
Wie sie mich binden und packen!
Zum Blutstuhl bin ich schon entrückt.
Schon zuckt nach jedem Nacken
Die Schärfe die nach meinem zückt.
Stumm liegt die Welt wie das Grab!

Faust. O wär' ich nie geboren!

Mephistopheles (*erscheint draussen*).
Auf! oder ihr seyd verloren.
Unnützes Zagen! Zaudern und
Plaudern!
Meine Pferde schaudern,
Der Morgen dämmert auf.

Margarete. Was steigt aus dem Boden herauf?
Der! der! Schicke ihn fort!
Was will der an dem heiligen Ort?
Er will mich!

Faust (*sie umfassend*). Ich lasse dich nicht!

Margarete. Ihr heiligen Engel bewahret meine Seele—mir grauts vor dir Heinrich.

Mephistopheles. Sie ist gerichtet! (*Er verschwindet mit Faust, die Thüre rasselt zu, man hört verhallend.*) Heinrich! Heinrich.

Faust. Du sollst leben.

Margarete. Gericht Gottes! dir hab' ich mich übergeben!
Mephistopheles (*zu Faust*). Komm! komm! Ich lasse dich mit ihr im Stich.
Margarete. Dein bin ich, Vater! Rette mich!
Ihr Engel! Ihr heiligen Schaaren, Lagert euch umher, mich zu bewahren!
Heinrich! Mir graut's vor dir.
Mephistopheles. Sie ist gerichtet.

Stimme (*von oben*). Ist gerettet!
Mephistopheles (*zu Faust*). Her zu mir!
[*verschwindet mit Faust.*
Stimme (*von innen, verhallend*). Heinrich! Heinrich!"[1]

In no other of his books has Goethe made so open a confession as in *Faust;* every crisis and every epoch in his eventful life have left their marks upon it; of all his works, it contains most of himself. "Die bedeutende Puppenspielfabel," he wrote in his autobiography in 1811 or 1812,[2] "klang und summte gar vieltönig in mir wieder. Auch ich hatte mich in allem Wissen umhergetrieben und war früh genug auf die Eitelkeit desselben hingewiesen worden. Ich hatte es auch im Leben auf allerley Weise versucht, und war immer unbefriedigter und gequälter zurückgekommen." The "marionette-fable" haunted him all his life; in Leipzig and Strassburg, it was blended with his experiences as a student; he made it a vehicle for his longings and ambitions, his studies and his passions; at a later date, his enthusiasm for classic antiquity was reflected in it, and, as we shall see in a subsequent chapter, his scientific and political interests found a niche in the Second Part. Thus, throughout his whole life, *Faust* never ceased for long to engage Goethe's attention, and it is, beyond question, his most universal and most grandly conceived work. In both *Iphigenie auf Tauris* and *Hermann und Dorothea*, he has created artistically more perfect poems,

[1] *Werke*, 14, 237 f., and 39, 318 f.
[2] *Dichtung und Wahrheit*, Book 10 (*Werke*, 27), 321.

but neither of these can vie with *Faust* in wealth of pregnant thoughts and width of issue. All that was best in the movement of ideas in the eighteenth century—its scepticism, its humanitarianism, its longings — has here crystallised into poetic form. *Faust* is the culmination of the movement in the midst of which the best part of Goethe's life was passed, and it is thus fit that it should close our discussion of him as a poet of the eighteenth century.

CHAPTER XIII.

SCHILLER'S LAST DRAMAS.

THE classic idealism of Goethe and Schiller is also to be seen in the repertory of the Weimar theatre at the turn of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Even in the early years of Goethe's directorship[1]—the theatre was controlled by him from May, 1791 to 1817—he gave no encouragement to the crass naturalism which, as an inheritance of the "Sturm und Drang," still pervaded the German stage and German acting in the last decade of the eighteenth century. The art of speaking verse was little cultivated, and dramas in verse were not popular. The production of *Wallenstein*, the first practical realisation of Goethe's aims as director, changed all this, and paved the way for adequate representations of *Iphigenie* and *Tasso*. Goethe, however, did not rest content with having thus established verse on the German stage; he went further, and attempted to model the theatre on antique lines. He schooled his actors in plastic movements, classic dramas were revived, and he himself translated Voltaire's *Mahomet* (1802) and *Tancred* (1802), both of which tragedies gave the performers an opportunity of practising declamation. And in all this he had the hearty sympathy of Schiller, whose *Braut von Messina* was, as we shall presently see, a close imitation of Greek tragedy. These efforts to remodel the modern theatre on classical lines naturally met with little enough favour, even in Weimar itself; but Goethe had the support of the Court. The future of the German theatre, it is true,

The Weimar Court theatre.

[1] Cp. E. Pasqué, *Goethes Theaterleitung in Weimar*, 2 vols., Leipzig, 1863; C. A. H. Burkhardt, *Das Repertoire des Weimarischen Theaters unter Goethes Leitung*, Hamburg, 1891.

did not at this time lie in a slavish imitation of the antique, any more than under Gottsched in the earlier part of the century; but the ideals which Goethe and Schiller kept constantly before their public held the balance against the sentimentalism and impressionism of the plays of ordinary life, to which Iffland had given so great a vogue.

These high aims notwithstanding, the taste of the public could not wholly be ignored, with the result that the dramatist who stood highest in favour on the Weimar stage at this time was August F. F. von Kotzebue,[1] no less than eighty-eight of his plays being included in the repertory. Kotzebue was himself a native of Weimar. He was born on May 7, 1761, and educated for a diplomatic career. In 1781, he was sent to St Petersburg, where he rose to an important position. He began by writing novels, but after the phenomenal success of the five-act drama, *Menschenhass und Reue* (1789), he wrote almost exclusively for the theatre. It is no exaggeration to say that for twenty years *Menschenhass und Reue* —in England, it was familiar under the title, *The Stranger*— was the most popular play not only in Germany, but in Europe. As a consequence of the imitation of later dramatists, the motives and effects of this play have become so threadbare that it is no longer playable; but if we will form a fair estimate of its merits, we must remember that the *technique* which won for it its extraordinary success was then entirely new. *Menschenhass und Reue* was followed by *Die Indianer in England* (1789), *Die Sonnen-Jungfrau* (1789), and *Das Kind der Liebe* (1790). To a later period belong *Graf Benjowsky* (1794), *Die Spanier in Peru, oder Rolla's Tod* (1795)—the best of Kotzebue's romantic tragedies — and *La Peyrouse* (1797). The play which longest maintained its hold on the German stage, *Die deutschen Kleinstädter*, did not appear until 1803. In 1797, Kotzebue was appointed dramatic adviser to the Viennese Burgtheater, but he remained in Vienna only for a couple of years. His next experiences were of an adventurous nature; he returned to Russia, became politically implicated, and spent four months as an exile in Siberia. In 1801, to the discomfiture of both Goethe and Schiller, he

A. von Kotzebue, 1761-1819.

Menschenhass und Reue, 1789.

Other plays.

[1] *Auswahl dramatischer Werke*, 10 vols., Leipzig, 1867-68. Cp. A. Hauffen, *Das Drama der klassischen Periode*, 2 (D.N.L., 139, 2 [1891]), 2 ff.; also C. Rabany, *Kotzebue, sa vie et son temps*, Paris, 1893.

again settled in Weimar, but three years later exchanged Weimar for Berlin. He was assassinated in 1819, by a student named Sand, who shared the opinion then current, especially in academic circles, that Kotzebue was acting as a spy on behalf of the Czar. This incident, leading as it did to the suppression of student clubs at the universities, had far-reaching political consequences.

Kotzebue is one of the despised figures of literature, the tasteless egotism of his biographical writings being largely responsible for the judgment passed on him by posterity. The higher ideals of poetry he held in cynical contempt, and it is impossible to measure his work by any serious standard; his theatrical effects are often crude and indefensible, but the favour which the public showed him was not wholly undeserved. When the worst has been said of Kotzebue, he remains one of the most fertile and ingenious writers for the theatre that ever lived; and he has influenced, as no other playwright, the entire development of the drama down to the present day. Indeed, in the evolution of modern dramatic *technique*, his work was even a more important factor than that of Scribe, a generation later.

The Ducal theatre in Weimar owes its importance for the history of German literature to the fact that Schiller's masterworks were produced there under the author's guidance and superintendence. In *Wallenstein* Schiller had found, as we have seen, the kind of work he was best fitted to do, and this tragedy was hardly out of his hands before he had begun a fresh one. Of all his dramas, *Maria Stuart*, which was written in 1799 and the first half of 1800, is the most widely popular; no other has been played so often on foreign stages. The chief reason undoubtedly is that Schiller has set himself the task of painting in sympathetic colours a beautiful and unfortunate woman. But *Maria Stuart* is also in other respects an effective tragedy: his study of the antique had taught Schiller the power of irony as a dramatic motive, as well as the advantage of simplicity and compactness in constructing a plot. In style and method, however, this drama has too much in common with the sentimental "bürgerliche Tragödie" to take high rank among the poet's works. Unlike *Wallenstein*, which, as we have seen, was a convincing political tragedy, *Maria Stuart* has virtually no political background; in point

Schiller's last dramas.

Maria Stuart 1800.

of fact, Schiller was only indifferently acquainted with the history of the period in which his tragedy plays. This lack of historical or political ballast is the most serious defect of *Maria Stuart*. Elizabeth stands in shadow, Mary in light, and the latter falls a victim to the envy of her rival. The two queens meet in the garden of Fotheringay Castle, in a scene which forms the climax of the drama, but they meet neither as the representatives of national forces, nor—as in the similar situation in the *Nibelungenlied*, where Kriemhild and Brünhild are brought face to face—as types of queenly scorn and queenly hate. The Queen of England appears as a jealous shrew and Mary Stuart as a sentimental heroine. The entire drama plays at Fotheringay Castle on the last three days of Mary's life; she is condemned before it begins, and it closes with her execution. The long, final act, in which she receives the consolations of her religion, and takes farewell of her women, is harrowing rather than tragic; for the reader has the feeling, and this in spite of the poet's accentuation of Mary's early sins, that she has no guilt upon her soul to expiate; her death is, in the economy of the drama, an accident, not a necessity.

Die Jungfrau von Orleans, 1801.

Die Jungfrau von Orleans (1801), with which Schiller entered that magic circle of poetic medievalism which the Romantic movement was at this time opening up to European literature, is in every respect a finer work. Jeanne d'Arc, a peasant girl of the village of Dom Remy, has prayed to the Virgin to save her land from the English, and the Virgin has appeared to her in her sleep, bearing a sword and a banner. "Ich bin's," she says to her—

> "'Ich bin's. Steh auf, Johanna. Lass die Heerde.
> Dich ruft der Herr zu einem anderen Geschäft!
> Nimm diese Fahne! Dieses Schwert umgürte dir!
> Damit vertilge meines Volkes Feinde,
> Und führe deines Herren Sohn nach Rheims,
> Und krön' ihn mit der königlichen Krone!'
> Ich aber sprach: Wie kann ich solcher That
> Mich unterwinden, eine zarte Magd,
> Unkundig des verderblichen Gefechts!
> Und sie versetzte: 'Eine reine Jungfrau
> Vollbringt jedwedes Herrliche auf Erden,
> Wenn sie der ird'schen Liebe widersteht.
> Sieh mich an! Eine keusche Magd, wie du,
> Hab' ich den Herrn, den göttlichen, gebohren,
> Und göttlich bin ich selbst!' Und sie berührte

Mein Augenlied, und als ich aufwärts sah,
Da war der Himmel voll von Engelknaben,
Die trugen weisse Lilien in der Hand,
Und süsser Ton verschwebte in den Lüften."[1]

Johanna leaves her home for the Court of the Dauphin at Chinon, where she wins credence for her story. Clothed in armour, a sword in one hand and a banner in the other, she goes out into battle, carries all before her, and puts the enemy to flight: the English are forced to raise the siege of Orleans, and Charles VII. is crowned at Rheims. So far Schiller followed history, or the story that long passed for authentic. According to further traditions, Jeanne subsequently fell into the hands of the English, and was burned by them as a witch in 1431. But, with a fine insight into the dramatic possibilities of the theme, Schiller has brought his heroine's fate into relation with her divine mission; he has made her power depend on her renunciation of earthly love. She rejects, it is true, the offers of marriage made to her by the French commanders Dunois and Lahire, but when she overcomes in single-handed combat the young English commander, Lionel, her heart softens towards him. The sword which she has raised to slay him falls from her hand; her vow is broken. And when her father accuses her before the Cathedral in Rheims of being in league with the powers of hell, when the roll of the thunder implies that Heaven sanctions his accusation, Johanna is filled with the sense of her own guilt and answers nothing. It is almost a relief to her to feel that her mission has been taken from her. Falling into the hands of the enemy, she is ready to atone for her broken vow by death; but Lionel, the man who has destroyed her power, protects her, and craves her love. Johanna's only thought, however, is to save her country. As the battle waxes fiercer and the French are being driven back, she sinks on her knees in passionate prayer to God to break her fetters, in order that she may once more rescue her king; her prayer is answered, she seizes a sword and throws herself into the thick of the fray. The fortune of battle changes and France is saved; Johanna, the saviour of her people, dies with the rosy light from heaven upon her face, the Virgin beckoning her from amidst

[1] Act 1, sc. 10 (*Werke*, 13, 217 ff.)

the angels. With her last words, "Kurz ist der Schmerz, und ewig ist die Freude!" the drama closes.

Die Jungfrau von Orleans, a Romantic tragedy.

Schiller described *Die Jungfrau von Orleans* as a "Romantic tragedy," and, to form a just estimate of the work, the reader must place himself at the standpoint of the poet's contemporaries; Schiller's drama is to be compared, not with his *Wallenstein*, but with Ludwig Tieck's Romantic play, *Genoveva*, which appeared in the preceding year. The spectral knight who warns the Maid of her fate, and the thunder of the scene before the Cathedral, are theatrical coups which belong rather to a Romantic opera than a classic tragedy; the Virgin and her angels, who reveal to Johanna her divine mission, and, when she dies, receive her at the gates of Heaven, now seem little more than decorative accessories. But such supernatural visions were in perfect harmony with the spirit and beliefs of medieval Christianity, which the Romanticists had resuscitated in their art and literature. On the other hand, the defects of the tragedy are due to Schiller's want of sympathy with the Romantic spirit; it was not possible for him to be Romantic and nothing more; he endeavoured to reconcile the medieval conceptions of life and religion, of duty and guilt, with those of his own century. His Maid of Orleans is never, as the Romantic poets would have drawn her, a naïve child of the fifteenth century; and, in the course of the drama, she undergoes a process of moral regeneration which could only have been possible in the poet's own time. Romantic medievalism and eighteenth-century enlightenment thus form two irreconcilable elements which have made it difficult for modern criticism to appreciate at their true worth the wealth of poetry and the dramatic beauties that the play contains.

More than a year elapsed after the completion of *Die Jungfrau von Orleans* before Schiller began his next drama, *Die Braut von Messina*. But he was by no means idle; one plan after another was sketched out and thrown aside. In each successive drama, he found it more difficult to satisfy his ideal of a tragic conflict; and it is obvious from the unfinished fragments of this period that the Greek conception of Fate, as a tragic motive, was uppermost in his mind. Schiller felt that in one tragedy, at least, he must meet the ancients on their own ground. Between *Maria Stuart* and

Die Jungfrau von Orleans, he had translated *Macbeth* (1801); in the winter of 1801-2, the only work he completed was a version of Gozzi's comedy, *Turandot;* but in August, 1802, with Sophocles' *Œdipus* as his model, he began to write *Die Braut von Messina*, the plan of which had occupied him several years previously, as *Die feindlichen Brüder*.

Macbeth, 1801.

Turandot, 1802.

Die Braut von Messina oder die feindlichen Brüder stands in the same relation to Schiller's earlier poetry as the *Achilleis* or *Pandora* to Goethe's; in other words, it is the culmination of his classical tendencies. *Die Braut von Messina* is, moreover, the most successful imitation of the antique that we owe to either poet. The plot of the drama is briefly as follows. A medieval Prince of Messina has a dream in which he sees a lily growing up between two laurel trees; suddenly the lily changes to fire and destroys everything around it. An Arabian gives an interpretation of this dream: the two laurels are the Prince's sons, Cæsar and Manuel; the lily is a daughter yet unborn, who will cause the death of them both. A daughter is, in fact, subsequently born, and the Prince commands her to be thrown into the sea; but her mother, Isabella, trusting also to a dream, upon which a monk has placed a more favourable interpretation, has the child secretly conveyed to a monastery and there brought up. Years pass, the father dies, and the two sons are at enmity with each other. When the drama opens, Isabella believes the time has come to test the monk's prediction that her daughter—

Die Braut von Messina, 1803.

> "der Söhne streitende Gemüther
> In heisser Liebesglut vereinen würde."

She tells her sons the secret of their sister's existence, and learns from them that they have each chosen a bride. But Isabella's happiness is short-lived. Her daughter Beatrice has been carried away from the convent; and this news is followed by the terrible discovery that both sons love the same woman, and that that woman is Beatrice. In blind jealousy, Don Cæsar kills Don Manuel, and, when he learns that Beatrice is his sister, stabs himself.

> "Wie die Seher verkündet, so ist es gekommen.
> Denn noch niemand entfloh dem verhängten Geschick.
> Und wer sich vermisst, es klüglich zu wenden,
> Der muss es selber erbauend vollenden."

The central figure of the tragedy is the mother, Isabella, a figure endowed with the antique dignity of a Medea. At the same time, Schiller's heroine is less statuesque than the heroines of antiquity; where the Greeks modelled, he, as a modern "sentimental" poet, describes. Consequently, the tragedy of Isabella's life is more vivid and moving than that of a Iocasta or Klytemnestra; it is not so simple. There is a tone bitterer than is to be found even in Euripides, in the wild mockery of Isabella's words:—

> "Was kümmerts Mich noch, ob die Götter sich
> Als Lügner zeigen oder sich als wahr
> Bestätigen? Mir haben sie das Ärgste
> Gethan—Trotz biet ich ihnen, mich noch härter
> Zu treffen, als sie trafen. . . .
> Alles diess
> Erleid ich schuldlos; doch bey Ehren bleiben
> Die Orakel, und gerettet sind die Götter."[1]

Die Braut von Messina is not divided into acts, and a commentary is provided to the action by a chorus, the introduction of which Schiller defended in a preface to the first edition of the play. This adoption of a convention no longer applicable to the modern theatre is without technical justification, and, more than anything else, has militated against the success of *Die Braut von Messina* as an acting-play. But the poet had here an opportunity, as in none of his other dramas, of giving expression to the lyric and reflective vein in his nature. One element, however, in the tragedy of the Greeks it lay beyond Schiller's power to reproduce; in vain do we seek the serenity of Æschylus or Sophocles in *Die Braut von Messina*. The calm decrees of an antique Fate become, when set in the medieval framework of Schiller's play, merely the caprices of an evil power; they rest upon the spectator like a nightmare. In other words, the day has gone by when it was possible to believe in destiny, as the Greeks conceived it, and Schiller fails to convince us that he himself believed in it. This is the source of weakness in *Die Braut von Messina*, as well as in the so-called "Schicksalstragödie," which, as we shall see in a subsequent chapter, arose as an imitation of that drama. The idea of fate savours too much of a superstition to be made the chief motive of a modern tragedy.

Both Goethe and Schiller felt that the stage had received

[1] *Werke*, 14, 65, and 114.

a consecration from the representation of *Die Braut von Messina*. But hardly a year after its first performance we find Schiller writing to Goethe (Feb. 8, 1804), "mit den griechischen Dingen ist es eben eine missliche Sache auf unserm Theater."[1] By this time, however, *Wilhelm Tell* was finished, and on March 17, 1804, it was performed amidst jubilation in Weimar. The struggle of the three Forest Cantons of Swtizerland — Schwyz, Uri, and Unterwalden — against the supremacy of the House of Austria at the beginning of the fourteenth century, forms the historical background of this drama. Schiller had found the facts in a Swiss chronicle of the sixteenth century by Ægidius Tschudi, who also relates the mythical story of the national hero, Wilhelm Tell. For an act of insubordination towards the Austrian Landvogt, Hermann Gessler, Tell is condemned by the latter to shoot an apple from his son's head in the market-place of Altdorf. The arrow divides the apple, and the child is saved. The Vogt, however, has seen Tell conceal a second arrow in his jerkin, and the latter fearlessly confesses the object of this arrow, had the first killed his child. He is put in chains and carried by boat to Küssnacht; on the way, a storm arises, and Tell is freed in order that he may guide the boat; he steers it near the shore, springs on land, and leaves the occupants of the boat to their fate. Gessler escapes the dangers of the storm only, however, to fall by Tell's arrow in the "hollow way" near Küssnacht.

Wilhelm Tell, 1804.

Schiller is hardly to be blamed for treating this theme with an epic breadth which he had not hitherto — even in *Wallenstein* — allowed himself. As a matter of fact, the whole story as it is set forth by Tschudi, and as Goethe had realised some years before, demands epic rather than dramatic treatment. Schiller's intention was here to bring before the spectator a whole nation in its struggle for independence; and on this basis, the unity of the work rests. Had the personal history of Tell been the central theme of the tragedy, as that of the Maid of Orleans in the earlier drama, the representatives of the old Swiss nobility, such as the Freiherr von Attinghausen, his nephew Ulrich von Rudenz, who is won over from the Austrian party by his *fiancée*, Bertha von Bruneck, would have been mere excrescences on the plot. In the same

Epic character of *Tell*.

[1] *Briefwechsel zwischen Schiller und Goethe*, 4th ed., 2, 363.

way, the famous scene upon the Rütli, where the Swiss make a covenant to rise against their oppressors, has little to do with Tell's personal fate. Even Tell himself is rather the personification of the national spirit of revolt than a hero acting with perfect freedom of will; it is, for instance, not a heroic action to kill an enemy from behind an ambush. But Schiller did not intend Tell to be regarded as a hero of the ordinary type; he is the spokesman of his nation and the leader of a just revolt.

"Ich lebte still und harmlos—Das Geschoss
War auf des Waldes Thiere nur gerichtet,
Meine Gedanken waren rein von Mord—
Du hast aus meinem Frieden mich heraus
Geschreckt, in gährend Drachengift hast du
Die Milch der frommen Denkart mir verwandelt,
Zum Ungeheuren hast du mich gewöhnt—
Wer sich des Kindes Haupt zum Ziele sezte,
Der kann auch treffen in das Herz des Feinds.

Die armen Kindlein, die unschuldigen,
Das treue Weib muss ich vor deiner Wuth
Beschützen, Landvogt!"[1]

Thus the fact that, not Tell, but the Swiss nation, is the hero of the drama justifies to some extent its loose construction. In *Wallenstein*, Schiller had also introduced a whole people or, at least, a representative class, but even in *Wallensteins Lager* he had only employed strictly dramatic means. The greater breadth and detail of the picture which he attempted to draw in *Wilhelm Tell*, made it necessary to have recourse to epic and even lyric elements, as in the opening scene and at the close of the fourth act. This, too, explains the least successful scene in the drama, that of the fifth act. But, after all, Schiller did not overcome the difficulty of blending Tell's personal fate with that of his country; he felt it necessary to accentuate the impersonal character of Gessler's murder, by introducing Duke Johann von Swabia, the murderer of the Austrian Emperor. Tell turns the parricide from the door, indignant that a murderer should seek shelter from him.

"Unglücklicher!
Darfst du der Ehrsucht blut'ge Schuld vermengen
Mit der gerechten Nothwehr eines Vaters?
Hast du der Kinder liebes Haupt vertheidigt?

[1] Act 4, sc. 3 (*Werke*, 14, 389).

Des Herdes Heiligthum beschützt? Das Schrecklichste
Das Letzte von den Deinen abgewehrt?
—Zum Himmel heb' ich meine reinen Hände,
Verfluche dich und deine That—Gerächt
Hab' ich die heilige Natur, die du
Geschändet—Nichts theil' ich mit dir—Gemordet
Hast du, ich hab' mein Theuerstes vertheidigt."[1]

The final act is unquestionably inferior to the rest of the drama, not merely because it lacks all organic connection with the plot, but because it forms an anti-climax, and weakens the impression of the whole.

Wilhelm Tell was the last drama which it was given to Schiller to complete. In the early summer of 1803, before beginning this tragedy, he had translated two French comedies by L. B. Picard under the titles *Der Parasit* and *Der Neffe als Onkel;* and in the course of 1804, he was more fertile in new plans than ever. A graceful "Festspiel," *Die Huldigung der Künste*, and a translation of Racine's *Phèdre* (*Phädra*) fall in the winter of 1804-5; not until January, 1805, did he decide to make the history of the Russian pretender, Demetrius, the subject of his next tragedy. But *Demetrius*[2] remains a torso of hardly two acts, which later hands have laboured in vain to finish. This fragment is certainly inferior to nothing Schiller had yet written, and it is even possible that the completed tragedy would have solved the problem which had engrossed his attention since *Wallenstein*—the reconciliation of antique tragedy with the modern tragedy of character. Schiller's last works were contemporary with the beginning of the Romantic movement, but before the poet's death that movement had not materially influenced the drama. The early attempts of both Werner and Kleist, it is true, had been played in 1803, but neither of these writers became a recognised force in German literature until several years later; and Grillparzer, the representative dramatist of the succeeding epoch, was not known until 1817. Thus Schiller's work, from *Maria Stuart* to *Tell*, might be said to stand between the dramatic literature of the eighteenth century—to which it bears most affinity—and that of the nineteenth.

Translations.

Demetrius, 1805.

Of the last five years of Schiller's life, which were a constant

[1] Act 5, sc. 2 (*Werke*, 14, 420).
[2] Cp. G. Kettner, *Schillers Demetrius, nach den Handschriften des Goethe- und Schiller-Archivs*, Weimar, 1894.

battle against ill-health, there is little to relate. At the end of 1799, he made Weimar his home; in 1801, he paid a visit to Leipzig, in 1804, to Berlin. At the beginning of 1805, he suffered severely, but, in March and April, he felt better again, and was able to resume work on *Demetrius*. On the 29th of April, however, he was taken seriously ill in the theatre, and his death occurred on the 9th of May.

Schiller's death.

Schiller is an admirable type of the "poet as hero." Others have had to fight against adversity, to live under untoward conditions, but few have come through the ordeal so well as he. His view of life was not a calm, dispassionate one like Goethe's, but then existence never appeared to him as a harmonious and well-ordered whole. Schiller went through life as a partisan, a fiery champion of high causes; the heir of the rationalistic ideals of moral conduct, he fought throughout his whole life for virtue. A utilitarian poet in the meaner sense of the word he was not, yet he never succeeded in divorcing his art from morality. His writings are inspired with a noble idealism, a lofty aspiration and enthusiasm, but they have less meaning for the modern world than the impartial realism of Goethe; the denizen of a naïver world than ours, he is representative of the vigorous iconoclasm of the eighteenth century which finally broke with the formal traditions handed down from the Renaissance. The hand of time has lain heavy on Schiller's poetry; he no longer speaks to us with a living voice, but, nevertheless, he remains the leading dramatic poet of German literature, and, after Goethe, the poet whose work has the firmest hold upon his nation.

CHAPTER XIV.

MINOR POETS OF THE CLASSICAL PERIOD. THE TRANSITION TO ROMANTICISM.

It is sometimes less easy to obtain a just idea of a brilliant period of literary history than of a mediocre one; for a single poet of the highest order destroys the whole perspective of literary criticism and alters the proportions of a historical survey. This is particularly noticeable in the age of German literature now under consideration: Goethe and Schiller dwarfed their contemporaries completely, and many poets whose talents would have won for them in less favoured epochs an honourable place in literary history, received only scant attention. To the more important of the minor writers, at the zenith of German classicism, we have to turn in the present chapter.

F. von Matthisson, 1761-1831.

Among these, Friedrich von Matthisson (1761-1831)[1] was perhaps the most gifted. Matthisson was a poet to find a parallel to whom it is necessary to go back at least to the Göttingen Bund. Some of his poems appeared as early as 1781 (*Lieder*), but the first considerable collection (*Gedichte*) was published in 1787, and found in Schiller a warm eulogist. These lyrics are, for the most part, elegiac in tone; their strength lies, as Schiller said, in sentimental descriptions of landscape-scenery, which recall the vignettes of eighteenth-century artists. A good example of Matthisson's verse is the familiar *Elegie am Genfersee*:—

> "Die Sonne sinkt; ein purpurfarbner Duft
> Schwimmt um Savoyens dunkle Tannenhügel;
> Der Alpen Schnee entglüht in hoher Luft;
> Geneva malt sich in der Fluten Spiegel.

[1] Cp. *Lyriker und Epiker der klassischen Periode*, 3 vols., ed. by M. Mendheim, 2 (D.N.L., 135, 2 [1893]), 191 ff.

In Gold verfliesst der Berggehölze Saum ;
Die Wiesenflur, beschneit von Blütenflocken,
Haucht Wohlgerüche ; Zefyr athmet kaum ;
Vom Jura schallt der Klang der Heerdenglocken."[1]

On the whole, this writer's range of poetic expression was not wide, and his love of nature, which recalls the old-world sentiment of Gessner's *Idylls*, is repeated with little variation in all his poems, and soon grows monotonous and wearisome.

J. G. von Salis-Seewis, 1762-1834.

In his footsteps followed the Swiss poet, Johann Gaudenz von Salis-Seewis (1762-1834),[2] whose *Gedichte* (1793), however, are manlier and less sentimental than Matthisson's ; soldier and officer by profession, he is more objective and more in touch with the world.

C. A. Tiedge, 1752-1841.

Another poet who may be classed with Matthisson is Christian August Tiedge (1752-1841). At the beginning of the nineteenth century, no poem was more popular than Tiedge's *Urania über Gott*, *Unsterblichkeit und Freiheit*, "ein lyrisch-didaktisches Gedicht" (1801),[3] inspired by the Kantian ethics, and couched in the tone of those books on popular philosophy which, as we have seen, were so widely read at the close of the eighteenth century : its language is flowing and musical, but beneath the pleasing exterior of the poem, as a new generation was quick to discover, there were only platitudes.

A glance through the innumerable poetic Almanachs of these decades reveals a host of lesser lyric talents which, in another age, might have demanded more attention. Here it is only possible to mention a few outstanding names.

G. L. Kosegarten, 1758-1818.

Gotthard Ludwig, or—as he called himself—Ludwig Theoboul Kosegarten (1758-1818), was a native of Mecklenburg ; his earliest poetry (*Melancholien*, 1777 ; *Gedichte*, collected in two volumes, 1788) was written under the influence of Klopstock and the Göttingen school ; but best-known were his idylls in the style made popular by Voss. If *Hermann und Dorothea* shows the artistic evolution of which Voss's idylls were capable, *Die Inselfahrt* (1805) and *Jucunde* (1808),[4] by Kosegarten, are examples of the eclogue in its decay. As a country pastor in Rügen, Kosegarten suffered severely under the

[1] Cp. D.N.L., 135, 2, 217.
[2] Ed. A. Frey, in D.N.L., 41, 2, 1884.
[3] Reprinted by M. Mendheim, *l.c.*, 2, 257 ff.
[4] Reprinted by M. Mendheim, *l.c.*, 3, 13 ff. Cp. H. Franck, *G. L. Kosegarten*, Halle, 1887.

triviality of provincial life, without having Voss's art of converting his experiences into poetry. He is fond of full-sounding epithets and has a lofty lyric style which is little in harmony with the simple themes of his poetry. To the Weimar Court circle belonged Amalie von Helvig-Imhoff (1776-1831), a niece of Goethe's friend, Frau von Stein. Her chief poem is *Die Schwestern von Lesbos*,[1] an epic in six cantos and hexameters, which, after being revised by Goethe, was published in Schiller's *Musenalmanach* for 1800.

A. von Helvig-Imhoff, 1776-1831.

Johann Gottfried Seume (1763-1810)[2] was a writer whose ideas were rooted in the "Geniezeit." A passionate hater of tyranny in all its forms, he was obliged, against his will, to take up arms against freedom, first in America and then in Poland. By birth a Saxon, he was on his way to Paris in 1781, to continue his studies, when he was kidnapped by Hessian recruiting-officers, and sold to England for service against her American rebels. On his return from America, he again fell into the hands of the military authorities, but ultimately was set at liberty, and settled near Leipzig. His poetry is inspired by the humanitarian ideals of the "Aufklärung" rather than by any inward lyric impulse; and the most familiar of his poems, *Der Wilde*, expresses in a new form that respect for the savage races, which Rousseau had first made fashionable in European literature. Seume's most characteristic works, however, are his prose autobiographical writings, *Spaziergang nach Syrakus im Jahre* 1802 (1803), *Mein Sommer*, 1805 (1806), and *Mein Leben* (1813). His prose has sometimes the lightness and vividness of Georg Forster's; and, if he has not Forster's wide artistic and scientific knowledge, he has, what was more unusual at the beginning of the century in Germany, political interests: *Mein Sommer* gives a vivid picture of the Napoleonic age.

J. G. Seume, 1763-1810.

Besides these minor poets, whose thought and work kept strictly within the boundaries of German classicism, and even occasionally recalled the era of "Sturm und Drang," another group of writers has to be considered at the close of the eighteenth century who, while still belonging to that century, prepared the way for the Romantic revival of the succeeding

[1] Reprinted by M. Mendheim, *l.c.*, 3, 107 ff.

[2] *Prosaische und poetische Werke*, 10 vols., Berlin, 1879. Cp. O. Planer and C. Reissmann, *J. G. Seume*, Leipzig, 1898.

From classicism to Romanticism.

age. The chief representatives of this transition from the classicism and humanitarianism of the eighteenth century to the Romantic individualism of the nineteenth, were Fichte in philosophy, and Richter and Hölderlin in literature.

J. G. Fichte, 1762-1814.

While Kant's work forms the culmination of the philosophical movement of his century, Fichte is to be regarded as a mediator between Kant and Romanticism. Johann Gottlieb Fichte[1] was a native of the same corner of Germany as Lessing, having been born in the Oberlausitz in 1762. After a youth of extreme hardships he fell, in 1790, under the influence of the Kantian philosophy, and shortly afterwards went to Königsberg, where Kant helped him to publish his first work. In 1794, he was appointed professor in Jena, and soon attracted many followers; but, four years later, he was obliged to lay down his professorship in consequence of an accusation of atheism. Fichte then settled in Berlin, where he was welcomed by the members of the Romantic School. In 1805, he was appointed professor at the then Prussian University of Erlangen; but the defeat of Prussia in the following year, again left him without a position. He returned to Berlin, and during Napoleon's investment of the Prussian capital, thundered forth the magnificent *Reden an die deutsche Nation* (1808), which contributed, in no small degree, to the awakening of German national feeling and the revolt against Napoleon. Fichte was the first rector of the new Berlin University; in 1814, however, he was carried off by hospital-fever, to which both he and his wife had exposed themselves, while nursing the wounded.

Fichte's individualism.

The details of Fichte's philosophic system, which grew out of Kant's, hardly concern us here; but his ethical doctrines were a powerful factor in literary evolution. The basis of his philosophy is the individual, the Ego; and the moral world, even reason itself, is the conscious creation of that Ego,—Faust's "Im Anfang war die That" might thus stand as the motto of all Fichte's work. His idealism was active and productive, and he exerted a regenerating power more as a moral than as a purely intellectual force. With a ruthlessness which even the medieval ascetics did not surpass, he preached principles of self-denial and resignation, preached that life is

[1] *Werke*, ed. I. H. Fichte, 8 vols., Berlin, 1845-46. Cp. K. Fischer, *J. G. Fichte*, 3rd ed., Heidelberg, 1897.

only holy in so far as it is founded on renunciation; he insisted that every man must, in the most literal sense, carve out his own destiny. This invigorating individualism and idealism were a chalybeate spring, in which the German spirit bathed itself, to emerge again with new strength, to face the struggle for national existence that lay before it at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Friedrich Schlegel called Fichte's *Wissenschaftslehre*, of which the first edition appeared in 1794, one of the three great "tendencies" of the age, the other two being *Wilhelm Meister* and the French Revolution. This was no more than an *aperçu* of the brilliant critic; but the fact is indisputable that from Fichte the Romantic School drew its most vital ethical ideas.

No German writer shares the character of both centuries to the same extent as the chief novelist of the classical period, Johann Paul Friedrich Richter.[1] His novels combine, in strange incongruity, the exaggeration and sentimentality of the "Sturm und Drang" with the stern idealism of Fichte, the old-fashioned *technique* of the German romance with an extraordinary imaginative power. "Jean Paul," the name with which Richter signed his earlier books, was born at Wunsiedel, in the Fichtelgebirge, on the 21st of March, 1763, and in 1781, went to the University of Leipzig to study theology. The bitter poverty which Richter experienced as a child, accompanied him throughout his student years. But it did not still his thirst for knowledge. After an unhappy experiment in publishing his first book, *Grönländische Prozesse* (1783-84), he returned home to escape his creditors; but there seemed even more prospect of his starving in the country than in Leipzig, and he accepted a miserable position as private tutor, with little hope of seeing his manuscripts in print. At length, in 1789, he induced a bookseller to print the *Auswahl aus des Teufels Papieren*, a continuation of the first satirical sketches which appeared while he was still in Leipzig. In the spring of 1790, Jean Paul obtained an appointment in a private school, and, from this time on, fortune was kinder to him; he published *Die unsichtbare Loge* (1793), a fantastic variation of the educational novel which had arisen under

J. P. F. Richter, 1763-1825.

[1] The most complete edition of Richter's works is that published by Hempel (60 vols.), Berlin, 1879; a selection edited by P. Nerrlich, 6 vols., in D.N.L., 130-134 [1884-87]. Cp. P. Nerrlich, *Jean Paul, sein Leben und seine Werke*, Berlin, 1889.

Rousseau's influence. *Die unsichtbare Loge* laid the foundation of Richter's popularity, but it was much inferior to his next book, *Hesperus, oder 45 Hundsposttage* (1795). Victor, the hero of this story, is the foster-son of a certain Lord Horion, and one of those noble-minded sentimentalists brought into vogue by the "Sturm und Drang." He becomes an oculist in order to cure his foster-father of blindness; the operation is successful, and Victor is appointed body-physician to a German prince. The conflict which Richter depicts, that of the idealist with the sordid realities of life, runs, as we have seen, through all the literature of this age; but Victor's strivings are apparently objectless, and the story tapers away to an ordinary sentimental romance.

Hesperus, 1795.

Quintus Fixlein, 1796.

Jean Paul's next romance, *Leben des Quintus Fixlein* (1796), was on similar lines to the little prose idyll which he had appended to the *Unsichtbare Loge*, under the title *Leben des vergnügten Schulmeisterleins Maria Wuz;* but *Fixlein* is a longer and more carefully written book. It tells how a poor school-teacher ultimately rises to be Pfarrer of the village church, and how he is able to marry and be happy. Slight as the story is, its idyllic charm is irresistible, and the whole is suffused with a gentle, almost lyrical, sentiment and pathos. A better example of Richter's skill in depicting the joys of common lives could hardly be found than his description of Fixlein's wedding; a passage from this scene will serve as an illustration of the author's style:—

"In der Frühe des Gebetläutens ging der Bräutigam, weil das Getöse der Zurüstungen sein stilles Beten aufhielt, in den Gottesacker hinaus, der (wie an mehren Orten) samt der Kirche gleichsam als Pfarrhof um sein Pfarrhaus lag. Hier auf dem nassen Grün, über dessen geschlossene Blumen die Kirchhofsmauer noch breite Schatten deckte, kühlte sich seine Seele von den heissen Träumen der Erde ab; hier, wo ihm die weisse Leichenplatte seines Lehrers wie das zugefallene Thor am Janustempel des Lebens vorkam. . . . Aber als er ins Haus kam, traf er alles im Schellengeläute und in der Janitscharenmusik der hochzeitlichen Freude an,—alle Hochzeitsgäste hatten die Nachtmützen heruntergethan und tranken sehr,—es wurde geplappert, gekocht, frisiert,—Thee-Servicen, Kaffee-Servicen und Warmbier-Servicen zogen hintereinander, und Suppenteller voll Brautkuchen gingen wie Töpfersscheiben und Schöpfräder um. Der Schulmeister probierte aus seinem Hause mit drei Jungen ein Arioso herüber, und wollte nach dem Ende der Singstunde seinen Vorgesetzten damit überraschen. Aber dann fielen alle Arme der

schäumenden Freudenströme in einander, als die mit Herzen und Vexierblumen behangene Himmelskönigin, die Braut, auf die Erde nieder kam voll zaghafter Freude, voll zitternder demüthiger Liebe —als die Glocken anfingen—als die Marschsäule ausrückte—als sich das Dorf noch eher zusammenstellte—als die Orgel, die Gemeinde, der Konfrater und die Spatzen an den Bäumen der Kirchfenster die Wirbel auf der Heerpauke des Jubelfestes immer länger schlugen. . . . Das Herz wollte dem singenden Bräutigam vor Freude aus der Weste hüpfen, 'dass es bey seinem Brauttage so ordentlich und prächtig hergehe.'"[1]

Quintus Fixlein was followed by a book which shared the character of both the idyll and the novel, and bore the long title, *Blumen-, Frucht- und Dornenstücke, oder Ehestand, Tod und Hochzeit des Armenadvocaten F. St. Siebenkäs* (1796-97). *Siebenkäs*, 1796-97. In this story a fantastic element, which was never altogether absent from Jean Paul's work, was brought into prominence. Siebenkäs, one of those sensitive, poetic souls in whom the novelist delighted, lives unhappily with his practically-minded wife, Lenette. An intimate friend, Leibgeber, introduces him to a young Englishwoman, Nathalie, with whom he falls in love. The problem now before him is how to free himself from Lenette, and begin a new and higher existence with the intellectual Nathalie. At Leibgeber's suggestion, Siebenkäs pretends to die, and allows his empty coffin to be buried; he himself escapes to Nathalie, while Lenette also finds a more congenial helpmate. The offence which Jean Paul here commits against good taste, not to speak of his defiance of accepted principles of social morality, shows that he had still too much "Sturm und Drang" in his veins, to take advantage of the possibilities which *Wilhelm Meister* had just begun to open up to German fiction.

After *Siebenkäs* came a number of smaller *genre* sketches, among which *Der Jubel-Senior* (1797) deserves the first place; and then between 1800 and 1803, Richter published his most ambitious novel, *Titan*, upon which he had been at work since 1797. *Titan*, 1800-3. The Titan of this novel, Albano, is again a hero that recalls the "Geniezeit"; he is one of those heaven-storming idealists who go through life making demands upon it, which never are and never can be satisfied. But the influence of *Wilhelm Meister* is to be seen in the fact that *Titan* is more closely knit together than its predecessors,

[1] P. Nerrlich's edition, 2 (D.N.L., 131, 1), 141 f.

and its aim is more definite. Albano, who grows up in ignorance of his parents, passes through a kind of apprenticeship to life, before coming into his kingdom as heir to the Prince of Hohenflies, and this training is, like Meister's, a sentimental education. The scene of the novel is laid for the most part in Italy, and the pivots round which it turns are Albano's relations to three women, the gentle, sentimental Liane—for whom Charlotte von Kalb, Schiller's friend, seems to have been the model—the Countess Linda de Romeiro, who is herself something of a Titan-nature, and lastly the Princess Idoine, in whom the hero finds a reflection of his better self, and whom he ultimately marries.

Flegeljahre, 1804-5.

Between 1802 and 1805, Jean Paul wrote another novel, *Flegeljahre* (1804-5), which was still more influenced by *Wilhelm Meister*. The hero of *Flegeljahre*, Gottwalt Harnisch, a shy, retiring, impracticable idealist with a good heart, is anything but a Titan; and the author sets out with the object of converting him into a man of the world. His education is fantastically set in scene, Gottwalt becoming universal heir of a wealthy relative, under conditions which bring him into conflict with the disappointed kinsfolk and thus effect his conversion to practical life. But the novel remains unfinished, and the problem with which it began, unsolved. Of Richter's later work little need be said; several other idylls followed, of which at least one, *Leben Fibels* (1812), almost ranks with *Quintus Fixlein;* but his last romance, *Der Komet, oder Nicolaus Marggraf* (1820-22), was again diffuse and disconnected. Besides writing fiction, Jean Paul was also the author of a *Vorschule der Aesthetik* (1804) and *Levana, oder Erziehungslehre*, a treatise on education, which appeared in 1807. From 1804 on, he lived in Bayreuth, where he died in 1825.

During his lifetime, Richter was a remarkably popular writer, but this was, for the most part, due to the sentimental tone of his romances; he appealed to the same class of readers who, in the previous generation, had wept over Clarissa Harlowe, Werther and Siegwart. In form and spirit, Richter's novels have, as we have seen, a closer resemblance to those of the "Sturm und Drang" than to *Wilhelm Meister* and the novels of the Romanticists; and thus, regarded merely as fiction, his work aged rapidly, and at the present

day the bulk of it is unreadable. With clumsy and often tasteless humour, Richter affected to despise those qualities of form and proportion which give literature abiding worth. Only an artistic instinct could have counterbalanced his extreme subjectivity, which out of the characters of his stories made mere channels for his own sentiments and views of life.

But this is only one aspect of Richter's work; to another and better class of readers among his contemporaries, just as to Börne a generation later, and to Carlyle and De Quincey in England, Jean Paul appealed as a humourist and, at the same time, as the bearer of a new gospel inspired by the idealism of Fichte. His refined spirituality, his constant and reverential subordination of the seen to the unseen, his contempt for time as opposed to eternity, his holy awe before the miracles of creation—in all this, Richter's mind was of an essentially Romantic cast. No writer, not even Novalis, has enriched German literature with so many significant aphorisms, so many scenes and passages of the highest imaginative beauty. There is nothing more impressive in German prose than the dream of the universe, which is introduced into *Der Komet* (*Traum über das All*), or the nightmare of atheism, which forms a "Blumenstück" in *Siebenkäs* under the title *Rede des Todten Christus vom Weltgebäude herab, dass kein Gott sey*:—

"Christus fuhr fort: 'Ich ging durch die Welten, ich stieg in die Sonnen und flog mit den Milchstrassen durch die Wüsten des Himmels; aber es ist kein Gott. Ich stieg herab, so weit das Sein seine Schatten wirft, und schauete in den Abgrund und rief: Vater, wo bist du? aber ich hörte nur den ewigen Sturm, den niemand regiert, und der schlummernde Regenbogen aus Westen stand ohne eine Sonne, die ihn schuf, über dem Abgrunde und tropfte hinunter. Und als ich aufblickte zur unermesslichen Welt nach dem göttlichen Auge, starrte sie mich mit einer leeren, bodenlosen Augenhöhle an; und die Ewigkeit lag auf dem Chaos und zernagte es und wiederkäuete sich—Schreiet fort, Misstöne, zerschreiet die Schatten; denn Er ist nicht!'"[1]

But for the readers of to-day, who no longer share Richter's Romantic conception of life, even this side of his work has not the vital interest that it once had, and the poetic beauty of individual passages cannot atone for the formlessness of the whole. Richter's claim to a worthy position in his nation's

[1] P. Nerrlich's edition, 2 (D.N.L., 131, 1), 430.

literature is best justified by his prose idylls. In painting the quiet, simple, unassuming life amidst which he grew up, in painting it with the truth and warmth of the old Dutch artists, Richter is unsurpassed, and his reputation to-day rests mainly on his chronicles of the pastors and schoolmasters whom he knew so well.

F. Hölderlin, 1770-1843.

The most gifted lyric genius among Germany's poets at the close of the eighteenth century was Friedrich Hölderlin.[1] Unlike Richter, Hölderlin had comparatively little of the Romantic spirit; the fervid pantheism, which inspires his work, was a legacy from the "Sturm und Drang," and, in all else, his temperament was Greek: he drew his inspiration from antiquity. Born in 1770, at Lauffen in Würtemberg, Hölderlin had more than his share of disappointments and unhappiness; the university appointments he aspired to were refused him, and he spent his best years in uncongenial tutoring. The most satisfactory position of this kind which he held, namely, that in the house of the banker Gontard in Frankfort, came to an abrupt end in 1798, owing to the poet's passion for the wife of his employer. This unhappy incident helped to make Hölderlin, who had always been sensitive and prone to melancholy, brooding and excitable. In December, 1801, after spending some months in Switzerland, he again became a private tutor, this time in Bordeaux. Except for one or two letters, his family heard nothing further of him, until one morning, in the June of the following year, he arrived home, in a state of mental derangement. For a time his condition showed signs of improvement, but the change was only temporary; the malady proved to be incurable, and he was placed first in an asylum in Tübingen and then in the house of a carpenter in that town. His death did not take place until 1843.

Hyperion, 1797-99.

Hölderlin's longest work is a romance in letters, *Hyperion, oder der Eremit in Griechenland*, which he had begun as a student; it appeared in two volumes in 1797 and 1799. Hyperion, a young Greek, takes part in the unhappy struggle of his people against the Turks in 1770, and in his letters describes his feelings, his hopes, and his disappointments.

[1] Hölderlin's *Gesammelte Dichtungen*, edited by B. Litzmann, 2 vols., Stuttgart, 1896; a selection by M. Mendheim, in D.N.L., 135, 2. Cp. C. C. T. Litzmann, *F. Hölderlins Leben*, Berlin, 1890.

There is little connected plot in the book, and the characters are shadowy and indistinct; the fervid tone is reminiscent of *Werther*, but the poet's enthusiasm for Greek antiquity throws a mellow light over the whole, which makes the reader forget how much it has in common with the "Sturm und Drang." Above all, the high-sounding, dithyrambic periods and vivid descriptions of Greek scenery—which Hölderlin himself never saw — make *Hyperion* a romance that stands alone in the literature of its time. The following apostrophe to nature will give some idea of the beauty of Hölderlin's prose:—

"Aber du scheinst noch, Sonne des Himmels! Du grünst noch, heilige Erde! Noch rauschen die Ströme ins Meer, und schattige Bäume säuseln im Mittag. Der Wonnegesang des Frühlings singt meine sterblichen Gedanken in Schlaf. Die Fülle der alllebendigen Welt ernährt und sättiget mit Trunkenheit mein darbend Wesen.

O selige Natur! Ich weiss nicht, wie mir geschiehet, wenn ich mein Auge erhebe vor deiner Schöne, aber alle Lust des Himmels ist in den Thränen, die ich weine vor dir, der Geliebte vor der Geliebten.

Mein ganzes Wesen verstummt und lauscht, wenn die zarte Welle der Luft mir um die Brust spielt. Verloren ins weite Blau, blick' ich oft hinauf an den Äther und hinein ins heilige Meer, und mir ist, als öffnet' ein verwandter Geist mir die Arme, als löste der Schmerz der Einsamkeit sich auf ins Leben der Gottheit.

Eins zu seyn mit allem, das ist Leben der Gottheit, das ist der Himmel des Menschen."[1]

A tragedy on the subject of *Empedokles* long occupied Hölderlin, but, as his novel plainly shows, he had none of the qualities that go to make a dramatist. He is essentially a lyric poet; his poetry is the fulfilment of what Schiller's *Götter Griechenlands* promised. In Hölderlin's earlier lyrics, the fervour of the "Geniezeit" stands in a somewhat incongruous contrast to the philosophic strain introduced by Schiller into the German lyric; but as soon as Hölderlin freed himself from the restraint of rhyme, and learned to move in free classical metres, his poetry attained a certain inner harmony and repose. A Bacchantic passion for Greece and a deep conviction of the oneness of God and nature, formed the two poles of Hölderlin's nature, and over all his writings lies a deep melancholy, a refined pessimism, which brings him into touch with the poets of the later nineteenth century. His lyrics.

[1] B. Litzmann's edition, 2, 68.

Hyperions Schicksalslied, 1789.

Never has the sense of man's helplessness been more nobly expressed than in *Hyperions Schicksalslied* (1789), the most beautiful poem that Hölderlin ever wrote:—

"Ihr wandelt droben im Licht
Auf weichem Boden, selige Genien!
Glänzende Götterlüfte
Rühren euch leicht,
Wie die Finger der Künstlerin
Heilige Saiten.

Schicksallos, wie der schlafende
Säugling, athmen die Himmlischen;
Keusch bewahrt
In bescheidener Knospe,
Blühet ewig
Ihnen der Geist,
Und die seligen Augen
Blicken in stiller
Ewiger Klarheit.

Doch uns ist gegeben,
Auf keiner Stätte zu ruh'n,
Es schwinden, es fallen
Die leidenden Menschen
Blindlings von einer
Stunde zur andern,
Wie Wasser von Klippe
Zu Klippe geworfen,
Jahrlang ins Ungewisse hinab."[1]

Dialect poetry.

Intimately associated with the rise of the Romantic movement in Germany was the interest taken in the language of the people: at the end of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth, dialect became for the first time a recognised medium of literary expression. Before then, the few poems which had been written in dialect, such as Voss's Low German idylls, attained merely a local celebrity. The first master of German dialect poetry is

J. P. Hebel, 1760-1826.

Johann Peter Hebel[2] (1760-1826), a native of Basle. Hebel was partly educated at Lörrach, a few miles north of Basle in the Black Forest, and wrote his *Allemannische Gedichte* (1803) in the dialect spoken in the neighbourhood of Lörrach. The charm of Hebel's verse, as of his mildly didactic stories in the *Rheinländische Hausfreund* (1808-11) and *Schatzkäst-*

[1] Cp. D.N.L., 135, 2, 456 f.

[2] Hebel's *Allemannische Gedichte* and *Schatzkästlein* are edited by O. Behagel (2 vols.), in D.N.L., 142 [1883]; also in Reclam's *Universal-Bibliothek*, 24 and 143-144, Leipzig, 1868-69.

lein (1811), is their absolute faithfulness to the *milieu* which they describe; nature and life are here viewed exclusively from the standpoint of the Black Forest peasant. Hebel was himself too much a child of the people to recognise the possibilities, which Auerbach discovered a generation later, of the peasant as a literary figure, and he was not appreciably influenced by the methods or theories of the Romanticists. As further masters of dialect-literature at the close of the century, may be mentioned the Austrian, Maurus Lindemayr (1723-83), and the Swiss artist and poet, Johann Martin Usteri (1763-1827), who wrote in the Zurich dialect: *De Vikari* and *De Herr Heiri*, the two best-known poems by the latter,[1] were modelled on Voss's idylls.

J. M. Usteri, 1763-1827.

The general movement of German literature in the eighteenth century may be said to have been from a false classicism to a true one. It began, as we have seen, with the imitation of the French classics of the seventeenth century; then came Lessing and Winckelmann, who vindicated the superiority of the classical spirit as seen in Greek antiquity, and taught the German people that their national art and literature were not dependent upon those of France. Lessing proved triumphantly that what was greatest in literature—above all, the drama of Shakespeare—was in complete harmony with the Greek spirit. Side by side with this æsthetic reformation went a deeper ethical movement; and after many a battle over faith and unbelief, over the nature of right and wrong, the moral philosophy of the eighteenth century arrived at a broad, calm humanitarianism, which was the real heritage of Rationalism. The evolution from Lessing's classicism to Goethe's humanitarianism had, however, been by no means uninterrupted; between these two men lay the intellectual upheaval known as the "Sturm und Drang." Advance was only possible by means of a return to nature—in other words, reform could only be effective if it were in harmony with nature. This reform accomplished, the movement of "Sturm und Drang" had no further reason for existence, and its unbalanced literature gave place to masterpieces like *Iphigenie*, *Hermann und Dorothea*, and Schiller's last dramas. Thus, a classical spirit, based, not on literary conventions, but on

[1] *Dichtungen in Versen und Prosa*, edited by D. Hess, 3 vols., 3rd. ed., Leipzig, 1877; *De Vikari* in Reclam, *l.c.*, 609-610, Leipzig, 1873.

poetic truth, was reinstated in German literature, and with the full development of this spirit, the eighteenth century may be said to culminate. Meanwhile, however, the vital ideas behind the "Sturm und Drang" were neither lost nor destroyed; they lived on, long after the "Sturm und Drang" had ceased to be the dominating force in Germany's literature, and, at the close of the century, rose once more into conflict with that classicism which, as we have seen, they had helped to establish on a solid basis. This movement of revolt is known as Romanticism.

PART V.

THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

CHAPTER I.

THE ROMANTIC SCHOOL.

At the Court of Weimar, the last night of the eighteenth century was celebrated by a masquerade arranged by Goethe himself, and midnight being past, he, Schiller, the philosopher Schelling, and the Norwegian Steffens withdrew into a side-room, where they made eloquent speeches and drank a welcome to the new century in champagne. It is not surprising, in view of the history of the preceding hundred years, that German literature should have entered upon the new era with boundless hopes and enthusiasm; but, as has already been indicated, the immediate future did not belong to the humanism which had formed the goal of the best tendencies of the eighteenth century. Two years before that century reached its close, a new intellectual movement, Romanticism, had taken definite shape, and this movement stood sponsor at the birth of the new epoch. Of the little group that hailed the nineteenth century so enthusiastically at the Weimar masquerade, Schelling and Steffens were leading spirits in the Romantic School; Schiller, although by nature little of a Romanticist, was at that very time engaged upon a Romantic tragedy, while to Goethe, the author of *Wilhelm Meister*, the new school looked up with reverence as its master.

The Romantic School.

It is one of the ironies of literary history that the Romantic School[1] should have been founded in the metropolis of ration-

[1] Cp. R. Haym, *Die romantische Schule*, Berlin, 1870; H. Hettner, *Die romantische Schule in ihrem inneren Zusammenhange mit Goethe und Schiller*, Brunswick, 1850; G. Brandes, *Den romantiske Skole i Tyskland* (*Hovedströmninger i det 19de Aarhundredes Litteratur*, 2), also in Brandes' *Samlede Skrifter*, 4, Copenhagen, 1900, 195 ff.; German translation, Leipzig, 1887.

alism, in Berlin: here, however, began, in 1797 and 1798, the friendship between Ludwig Tieck and the two brothers Schlegel, and here also, in 1798, was published the first number of the *Athenæum* (1798-1800). But Berlin was only the birthplace of the School; in the summer of the following year, the chief Romanticists found a more congenial home in Jena. The principles and aims of Romanticism were, in this early period, vague and indefinite—indeed, the Romantic School had virtually ceased to exist before clear definitions had been formulated at all—but, from the first, the School was the centre for a group of brilliant men and hardly less brilliant women, who were drawn together by a determination to have done with the utilitarianism which still flourished under the protection of writers like Nicolai—men and women inspired by a common idealism, by a craving for a spiritual, more unworldly poetry and art, and for a form of artistic expression that was in harmony with life. The Romantic School, it is true, ultimately drifted into a mystic Catholicism, a blind worship of the medieval, a glorification of "Volkspoesie," all of which tendencies were potentially present in the movement from the first, but some years elapsed before these principles stiffened into dogmas.

"Die romantische Poesie," said Friedrich Schlegel in one of his *Fragmente*, "ist eine progressive Universalpoesie. Ihre Bestimmung ist nicht bloss, alle getrennte Gattungen der Poesie wieder zu vereinigen, und die Poesie mit der Philosophie und Rhetorik in Berührung zu setzen. Sie will, und soll auch Poesie und Prosa, Genialität und Kritik, Kunstpoesie und Naturpoesie bald mischen, bald verschmelzen, die Poesie lebendig und gesellig, und das Leben und die Gesellschaft poetisch machen, den Witz poetisiren, und die Formen der Kunst mit gediegnem Bildungsstoff jeder Art anfüllen und sättigen, und durch die Schwingungen des Humors beseelen. Sie umfasst alles, was nur poetisch ist, vom grössten wieder mehre Systeme in sich enthaltenden Systeme der Kunst, bis zu dem Seufzer, dem Kuss, den das dichtende Kind aushaucht in kunstlosen Gesang."[1]

The humanism of the eighteenth century had been analytic and objective, collective and cosmopolitan; the spirit of the new movement was synthetic and subjective, individualistic and national. Romanticism is the characteristic expression

[1] *Athenæum*, 1, 2 (1798), 28; F. Schlegel's *Prosaische Jugendschriften*, ed. J. Minor, Vienna, 1882, 2, 220.

of the Germanic temperament, just as that of the Latin races is associated with the word "classic."

The brothers Schlegel, who were in the first place critics and interpreters, not poets, are the chief representatives of Romanticism in its theoretic and stimulating aspects. They came of a notable literary family; their father, Johann Adolf Schlegel, a pastor in Hanover, was, it will be remembered, a contributor to the *Bremer Beiträge*, and their uncle, J. E. Schlegel, Lessing's most gifted forerunner. August Wilhelm,[1] the elder of the two brothers, was born on September 8, 1767, and studied in Göttingen under Heyne and Bürger, from the latter of whom he learned at least the technicalities of verse-writing. After three years as a private tutor in Amsterdam, Schlegel settled in 1796, in Jena, with the intention of living by his pen; and here his activity as a critic began in earnest. He was one of the contributors to the *Horen*, in which he published a number of critical essays, as well as specimens of his translation of Shakespeare. The last-mentioned work was Schlegel's most significant achievement, and perhaps, at the same time, the most significant of the whole Romantic School. The verbal accuracy of the translation is not always irreproachable, but the skill with which each line of the original is rendered by an exactly corresponding line, is astonishing; while Schlegel's adaptation of English blank verse to the German iambic metre of five feet led to the general employment of that metre for dramatic purposes. Most remarkable is Schlegel's ability to identify himself with Shakespeare's point of view; his translation reproduces faithfully the atmosphere and spirit of the Elizabethan drama; he has made Shakespeare a national poet of the German people, and this is, after all, the highest tribute that can be paid to his work. Schlegel himself translated only seventeen of the plays, of which sixteen appeared in eight volumes between 1797 and 1801, *Richard III.* following nine years later. The remaining dramas were completed by Graf Wolf Baudissin (1789-1878) and by Tieck's daughter Dorothea (1799-1841).[2]

A. W. Schlegel, 1767-1845.

Shakespeare's *Dramatische Werke*, 1797-1810.

In translating Shakespeare, Schlegel had an able assistant

[1] *Sämmtliche Werke*, edited by E. Böcking, 12 vols., Leipzig, 1846-47. Cp. *A. W. und F. Schlegel*, edited by O. F. Walzel (D.N.L., 143 [1892]).

[2] Cp. M. Bernays, *Zur Entstehungsgeschichte des Schlegel'schen Shakespeare*, Leipzig, 1872.

Caroline Schlegel, 1763-1809.

in his wife Caroline (1763-1809), daughter of the Göttingen orientalist, J. D. Michaelis. When Schlegel married her in 1796, Caroline had a checkered life behind her; and in 1803, they were divorced, whereupon she became the wife of the philosopher Schelling. The most brilliant and accomplished woman of the Romantic School, Caroline Schlegel left no independent literary work—unless her letters[1] are regarded as such—but her share in her husband's writings was not a small one. The fine essay, *Über Shakespeares Romeo und Julia*, for instance, which appeared in the *Horen* in 1797, was mainly by her, and it is significant that after her separation from Schlegel, he left his edition of Shakespeare to be completed by other hands.

A. W. Schlegel as critic.

The power of placing himself in the position of his original, which made Schlegel so skilful a translator, was also the secret of his ability as a critic. With contributions to the *Horen*, the *Athenæum*, and other periodicals, with his lectures *Über schöne Litteratur und Kunst* (1801-4), and the still more famous lectures delivered in Vienna, *Über dramatische Kunst und Litteratur* (published 1809-11), Schlegel gradually built up his reputation. He not only gave Shakespeare his place in the literature of the world, but also awakened the interest of the Germans in their own earlier literature. It was under Schlegel's influence that Tieck, in 1803, edited *Minnelieder aus dem schwäbischen Zeitalter*, and F. H. von der Hagen (1780-1856), in 1810, published his edition of the *Nibelungenlied;* and no less important were the services rendered by Schlegel to German literature, in his appreciations and translations of the chief poets of the Latin races—Cervantes and Camoens, Dante and Calderon.

Later life.

In 1804, on the recommendation of Goethe, Madame de Stäel appointed August Wilhelm Schlegel, travelling companion and tutor to her sons; with her he visited Italy and Scandinavia. In 1813 and 1814, he was secretary to the Crown Prince of Sweden; then he rejoined Madame de Stäel at Coppet on Lake Geneva, where he acted as her adviser while she wrote *De l'Allemagne* (1817),[2] the book by which,

[1] Published by G. Waitz in *Caroline*, Leipzig, 1871, and *Caroline und ihre Freunde*, Leipzig, 1882.

[2] Cp. for Schlegel's share in *De l'Allemagne*, O. F. Walzel's study in *Forschungen zur neueren Litteraturgeschichte. Festgabe für R. Heinzel*, Weimar, 1898, 275 ff.

at one stroke, German literature became a force in Europe. After Madame de Staël's death in 1817, Schlegel received a professorship in the University of Bonn, which he held until his own death in 1845. The eccentricities of his later years destroyed to a large extent the respect of the younger generation for him; but the oriental studies with which he occupied himself, added considerably to his reputation as a scholar. Schlegel's original poetry has little or no value; it is essentially the poetry of a critic. The lessons of form which he learned from his old master, Bürger, he never forgot; but the intrinsic poetic worth of his verses is not great. Besides shorter poems, first collected in 1800 (*Gedichte*), Schlegel wrote a classical tragedy, *Ion* (1803), for which Goethe tried in vain to win the applause of the Weimar public.

Friedrich Schlegel (born March 10, 1772; died 1829)[1] was not so well balanced as his cooler and more critical brother; he was easily carried away by enthusiasms and new theories—in other words, he had more genius, if less talent, than August Wilhelm. He, too, had studied in Göttingen, and devoted himself mainly to classical literature, on which, from 1794 on, he published several suggestive essays (*Die Griechen und die Römer*, 1796). The noteworthy feature of these essays is their attempt to define—under the influence of Schiller's æsthetic treatises—the nature of ancient, as compared with modern, literature. An elaborate history of classical poetry, inspired by Winckelmann and Herder, did not get farther than the first volume (1798). Friedrich Schlegel's active enthusiasm, however, was the main factor in the foundation of the Romantic School; he made Fichte's idealism the philosophic basis of the movement, and in his brilliant *Fragmente*, contributed to the *Athenæum* and other reviews, gave the most lucid statement of the Romantic doctrine. It was in the "fragment" that Friedrich Schlegel found the channel of expression congenial to him; his most stimulating ideas are presented in the form of aphorisms. In 1799, he published a fragmentary romance, *Lucinde*, by far the crudest of all the Romantic novels. *Lucinde* is an attempt to carry the Romantic antagonism to boundaries and dividing lines into the ordinary relations of society. But so far from giving a fair picture of the Romantic principles of life, it

Friedrich Schlegel, 1772-1829.

Lucinde, 1799.

[1] *Sämmtliche Werke*, 2nd ed., 15 vols., Vienna, 1846.

caricatures them; instead of vindicating a higher spirituality, Schlegel only advocates the freedom of passion. It is, however, significant that this strange, morbid novel called forth the commendation of an earnest-minded thinker like Schleiermacher, who, in 1800, wrote a series of *Vertraute Briefe über Lucinde*. Friedrich Schlegel had not even as much creative talent as his brother, and what he had, was less under critical control; his tragedy *Alarcos* (1802), an imitation of Tieck's romantic dramas, is inferior to August Wilhelm's *Ion*. As a critic, however, Friedrich Schlegel supplemented his brother's work, first, by his classical studies, and later, when he sought the highest Romanticism in the literature of the East. In 1803, he went to Paris to learn Sanskrit, and the result of his studies was a treatise *Über die Sprache und Weisheit der Indier* (1808), the most valuable, or, at least, the most stimulating of all his writings; this book was a starting-point both for the study of Indian philology and for the science of comparative philology. Friedrich Schlegel's wife, Dorothea (1763-1839), a daughter of the philosopher Moses Mendelssohn, was of the same age as Caroline Schlegel, and also one of the prominent women of the Romantic circle; she translated Madame de Staël's *Corinne*, and wrote an unfinished, but well-constructed, Romantic novel called *Florentin* (1801).

Oriental studies.

Dorothea Schlegel, 1763-1839.

Romantic criticism.

Previous to the Schlegels, the critical study of literature was a modest department of learning, with a prospect, if anything, narrower than that of the political history of the time; in their hands it became a magnificent vantage-ground, from which one could look backwards into antiquity and medievalism, and far and wide over the intellectual life of all nations. The methods of the eighteenth century had been critical and little more; the method of the Schlegels was less critical than interpretative. Their aim was to reconcile the critic and the object or person criticised; author and reviewer were no longer to stand opposed to each other as antagonists. A critic's first duty was not to pass judgment, but to understand, to characterise, to interpret. With this principle began a new era in the history of criticism. The Schlegels realised what Herder, in his vague, enthusiastic way, had dreamt of; it was they who gave Goethe's idea of a "Weltlitteratur" substantial form. And this idea, too, was Romantic; for it tended, with the help of art and poetry, to break down the

boundaries of national prejudices. Their Romanticism made the Schlegels cosmopolites.

J. L. Tieck, 1773-1853.

Johann Ludwig Tieck[1] was the youngest of the leaders of the Romantic School, but his work illustrates most clearly the transition from the "Sturm und Drang" to the "Romantik." Tieck was born in Berlin in 1773, the year of Goethe's *Götz von Berlichingen;* and *Götz*, *Werther*, and *Die Räuber* were the favourite books of his boyhood. His own early stories, when not actually written to the order of Nicolai (*Strauss-federn*, 1795-98), belong essentially to the "Sturm und Drang." The most ambitious of them is the *Geschichte des Herrn William Lovell* (1795-96), a characteristic "Sturm und Drang" romance in the form of letters, but tempered by the influence of Wieland. Lovell, a youth of good impulses and noble ambitions, who is led astray by an evil friend, belongs obviously to the same class of hero as Werther and Karl Moor; but there is blood in his veins that was not in theirs; his dreamy melancholy and indecision of character have an unmistakably Romantic tinge. The psychology of the novel, however, is not convincing, and instead of being tragic, it describes only crimes and horrors. A more distinctive and positive side of Tieck's genius is shown by a play with which, in 1797, he took Berlin by storm, *Der gestiefelte Kater; ein Kindermährchen in drey Akten.* This *Puss in Boots* is the best satirical drama in German literature. It labours, it is true, under the disadvantage that Tieck's satire is purely literary; but it did excellent service in its time by helping to destroy the utilitarian principles of the "Aufklärung" and by bringing into discredit the "moral" comedies of the type associated with Iffland and Kotzebue. A later dramatic satire, *Prinz Zerbino* (1799), although poetically more ambitious than the *Gestiefelte Kater*, is placed at a disadvantage by its inordinate length.

William Lovell, 1795-96.

Der gestiefelte Kater, 1797.

The Romantic element in Tieck's nature was first fully developed by a companion of his student-days, W. H. Wackenroder (1773-98),[2] who was also a native of Berlin. Wackenroder was one of those gentle, child-like souls to whom the

W. H. Wackenroder, 1773-98.

[1] L. Tieck's *Schriften*, 15 vols., Berlin, 1828-29. Cp. R. Köpke, *Ludwig Tieck*, Leipzig, 1855. A biography of Tieck prefaces the selections from Tieck's works, edited by G. L. Klee, Leipzig [1894]. Cp. also the selections from Tieck, edited by J. Minor, in D.N.L., 144, 1 and 2 [1885].

[2] Cp. *Tieck und Wackenroder*, edited by J. Minor, D.N.L., 145 [1886].

Romantic School owes its most stimulating and far-reaching ideas. From his passionate love for the beautiful sprang his conviction of the holy earnestness of art; a life devoted to its service seemed to him the noblest life. This enthusiasm for art is what makes the tiny volume of *Herzensergiessungen eines kunstliebenden Klosterbruders* (1797) so valuable a document for the history of the "Romantik." With the exception of one or two sketches, this book is Wackenroder's work, Tieck being only responsible for the editing, but after Wackenroder's early death at the age of twenty-five, his friend published a continuation, *Phantasien über die Kunst* (1799), to which he contributed about half the contents. These two little books contain the earliest expression of the Romantic æsthetics: here art is holy, art is divine; it is a religion founded upon the fervent enthusiasm of sensitive souls. Warmly, however, as Wackenroder loved Dürer and Raphael, music was the art with which he was most in sympathy; music is "das Land des Glaubens, wo alle unsre Zweifel und unsre Leiden sich in ein tönendes Meer verlieren." And in the same spirit, Tieck sings:—

Herzensergiessungen, 1797.

Phantasien über die Kunst, 1799.

"Liebe denkt in süssen Tönen,
Denn Gedanken stehn zu fern,
Nur in Tönen mag sie gern
Alles, was sie will, verschönen.
Drum ist ewig uns zugegen,
Wenn Musik mit Klängen spricht,
Ihr die Sprache nicht gebricht,
Holde Lieb' auf allen Wegen;
Liebe kann sich nicht bewegen,
Leihet sie den Othem nicht."[1]

Thus, at the very outset, the Romantic conception of art came into conflict with the classical ideals for which Goethe had fought since his residence in Italy, and they also in great measure undid what Lessing had achieved in the previous generation. In the glow of Romantic enthusiasm, the hard-and-fast boundaries which the *Laokoon* had established between poetry and the other arts, melted away, and confusion reigned once more; tones, colours, words were, in the eyes of these young poets and critics, but different forms of the one language of the soul.

The most considerable outcome of Tieck and Wackenroder's

[1] Cp. *Phantasien über die Kunst*, 1799, 150 and 246.

joint-authorship was the romance, *Franz Sternbalds Wanderungen: eine altdeutsche Geschichte*, published by Tieck in 1798. This, the first characteristic novel of the Romantic School, was written exclusively by Tieck, but the plot and the ideas upon which it is based date back to the excursions which the two friends made to Nürnberg and the Fichtelgebirge, while students together at Erlangen, in 1793. Franz Sternbald is a gifted pupil of Dürer's who sets out from Nürnberg upon his wanderings, comes first to Holland, and from Holland turns his steps to Italy. He meets with companions by the way, and love episodes are not wanting, but little happens in the book and it remains unfinished. To *Wilhelm Meister*, the fountainhead, as we have seen, of the entire fiction of the Romantic School,[1] *Franz Sternbald* naturally owes much; the minor characters, especially the women, are close imitations of those in *Meister*, and Goethe's example is the excuse for the many lyrics that are interspersed. At the same time, the influence of Heinse, the creator of the "Kunstroman" in German literature, is not to be mistaken. The pleasantest feature of the novel is the spontaneous, youthful freshness of the opening chapters, the buoyant delight in nature and the reverent worship of art. Between *Lovell* and *Sternbald*, might be said to run the line that separates "Sturm und Drang" from Romanticism.

Franz Sternbalds Wanderungen, 1798.

It was Wackenroder also who opened Tieck's eyes to the poetry that lay concealed in "Märchen" and "Volksbücher"; and to Tieck's interest in such things we owe the three volumes of *Volksmährchen* (1797), which, besides the *Gestiefelte Kater* and a dramatic "Ammenmährchen" *Ritter Blaubart*, contained two charming fairy tales, *Der blonde Eckbert* and *Die schöne Magelone*. In all these "Märchen," Tieck displays the fondness for ridiculing the creations of his own imagination, which was common to all the members of the School; in fact, this so-called "Romantic irony"—which Tieck once characterised as "jene letzte Vollendung eines Kunstwerks, jenen Äthergeist, der befriedigt und unbefangen über dem Ganzen schwebt"[2]—was regarded by the Romanticists as the most potent means of heightening poetic or dramatic effect.

Tieck's Märchen.

[1] J. O. E. Donner, *Der Einfluss Wilhelm Meisters auf den Roman der Romantiker*, Berlin, 1893.

[2] Cp. H. Hettner, *Die Romantische Schule*, Brunswick, 1850, 65.

Tieck's next fairy tales, *Der getreue Eckart* and *Historie von der Melusina*, were published, together with the dramas, *Genoveva* and *Rothkäppchen*, in the *Romantischen Dichtungen* (1799-1800), *Der Runenberg* in 1804. There is little here of the naïve tone of the true "Volksmärchen," which the brothers Grimm caught in their *Kinder- und Hausmärchen;* but Tieck is not wanting in naïveté; on the contrary, he revels in the supernatural like a child, although in a peculiarly Romantic way. The forest, the "Waldeinsamkeit" of *Eckbert*, the birds, the sea, the sky, all enter into a mystic, poetic relation with human life; and the moods and feelings of the personages are reflected in the nature around them.

Genoveva, 1799.

Tieck's most ambitious works, as a dramatic poet, are the two "Märchendramen," *Leben und Tod der heiligen Genoveva* (1799) and *Kaiser Octavianus* (1804). The "Stürmer und Dränger" Maler Müller had, it will be remembered, dramatised the story of the unhappy Pfalzgräfin Genoveva, who, in her husband's absence, awakens a passion in the faithless Golo, and dies the victim of his revenge. Müller's play came into Tieck's hands in MS. in 1797, and undoubtedly suggested the subject to him; but there is no resemblance between the two works except in a few lines of a song. Tieck's *Genoveva* is a typically Romantic poem; it is a drama without action. The story is unrolled as on a tapestry over which plays the changing light of all the influences —Shakespeare, Calderon, religious mysticism — which had moulded the poet's individuality. The language, although defective in dramatic qualities, is resplendent with music and imagery; and wherever the scene may be—on the battlefield, in a castle-dungeon or in a garden flooded with moonlight, it is invariably enveloped in a soft Romantic haze.

Kaiser Octavianus, 1804.

Kaiser Octavianus, which is also based on a "Volksbuch," and goes a step further than *Genoveva*, is the best example of the fantastic trend in Tieck's poetry. *Kaiser Octavianus* is a medieval mystery, or, at least, a drama that plays amidst the Romantic medievalism which Tieck and Novalis distilled from the painting and literature of the middle ages. In outline, the drama is similar to *Genoveva*, but it is conceived in a more epic spirit than its predecessor, the personal history of the hero being merely an episode in the whole. *Kaiser Octavianus* is virtually an allegorical history of the rise of

Christianity, and its object is to show how dissension amongst the heathen peoples disappeared before the beneficent influence of the Christian Church. The scene of the drama, which culminates in a glorification of the middle ages, is virtually the whole medieval world, and its personages include all types of that world from prince to peasant, from chivalrous knight to sanguinary Turk. That such a subject is too comprehensive for dramatic treatment, even in the four hundred pages which *Octavianus* occupies in Tieck's works, is sufficiently obvious, and Tieck does not even attempt to write a real drama; he is content to supply merely a framework for the restless, ever-changing play of his poetic moods. *Kaiser Octavianus* begins with a prologue, *Der Aufzug der Romanze*, and "Romanze," as a personification of the Romantic spirit, acts as a chorus in the drama itself. This opening allegory embodies, in somewhat confused form, the essentials of Tieck's poetic faith; the great Romantic virtues, Love and Faith, Humour and Valour, are grouped among the knights and shepherds, pilgrims and wanderers of an ideal world. In this poem occur the lines which have become one of the mottoes of the School:—

"Mondbeglänzte Zaubernacht,
Die den Sinn gefangen hält,
Wundervolle Märchenwelt,
Steig' auf in der alten Pracht."[1]

Between 1799 and 1801, Tieck published an excellent translation of *Don Quixote*, and between 1812 and 1816, under the title *Phantasus*, he collected his earlier Romantic stories, and embedded them in a connecting narrative. Long, however, before the publication of *Phantasus*, the purely Romantic period in Tieck's life had come to a close; in 1804, he went to Rome, and did not return to Germany until 1806.

Phantasus, 1812-16.

Wackenroder was not the only gentle nature that clung to Tieck, as a tender plant to a strong branch; a greater than Wackenroder, Friedrich von Hardenberg, also sought and found support in Tieck's robuster character.[2] Born in 1772, Hardenberg, better known by his pseudonym of Novalis,

F. von Hardenberg, "Novalis," 1772-1801.

[1] *Schriften*, I, 33.

[2] *Novalis Schriften*, edited by E. Heilborn, 3 vols., Berlin, 1901. Cp. A. Schubart, *Novalis' Leben, Dichten und Denken*, Gütersloh, 1887; J. Bing, *Novalis*, Hamburg, 1893; E. Heilborn, *Novalis, der Romantiker*, Berlin, 1901.

grew up in an intensely religious home. During his student-days at Jena, he came under the influence of Schiller and Reinhold, and, in Leipzig, made the acquaintance of Friedrich Schlegel. In 1792, he went to Wittenberg to study law, and, in 1794, settled at Tennstädt, near Langensalza. Here his poetic genius was awakened by a passion for a girl who, like Dante's Beatrice, had not passed the years of childhood. Sophie von Kühn was only twelve years of age when Novalis first saw her, and in 1797 she died. The blow to the poet's sensitive nature was overpowering, and from his sorrow sprang the *Hymnen an die Nacht* (1800), which contain some of the most spiritual poetry in the German tongue. Never has religion blended more perfectly with personal grief and bereavement than in these outpourings of the soul, in which the "holy, inexpressible, mysterious Night" symbolises the Nirvana of earthly sufferings. These hymns, which are, for the most part, in rhythmical prose, contain the poetic essence of Jakob Böhme's mysticism.

Hymnen an die Nacht, 1800.

"Was hältst du, Nacht, unter deinem Mantel, das mir unsichtbar kräftig an die Seele geht? Köstlicher Balsam träuft aus deiner Hand, aus dem Bündel Mohn. Die schweren Flügel des Gemüths hebst du empor. . . . Wie arm und kindisch dünkt mir das Licht nun—wie erfreulich und gesegnet des Tages Abschied. . . . . Himmlischer, als jene blitzenden Sterne, dünken uns die unendlichen Augen, die die Nacht in uns geöffnet. Weiter sehn sie, als die blässesten jener zahllosen Heere—unbedürftig des Lichts durchschaun sie die Tiefen eines liebenden Gemüths—was einen höhern Raum mit unsäglicher Wollust füllt. Preis der Weltköniginn, der hohen Verkündigerinn heiliger Welten, der Pflegerinn seliger Liebe—sie sendet mir dich—zarte Geliebte—liebliche Sonne der Nacht."[1]

It seemed an example of that irony which the Romanticists saw behind all life and endeavour, that the death Novalis desired so intensely in his sorrow should have come a few years later, at a time when love had again brought zest into his life, and when the friendship of Tieck, whom he met in 1799, encouraged him to make new plans of work. Consumption had set its mark upon him, and on the 25th of March, 1801, he died from a sudden hemorrhage, before he had attained his twenty-ninth year.

In Novalis's *Geistliche Lieder*, the mystic fervour of the

[1] *Schriften*, ed. E. Heilborn, 1, 445 f.; cp. 1, 307 f.

Hymnen an die Nacht became distinctly Catholic in tone, while the most definite expression of his leaning towards Catholicism is the noteworthy essay on *Die Christenheit oder Europa* (1799). Novalis also left two prose romances, *Die Lehrlinge zu Sais* and *Heinrich von Ofterdingen* (published 1802), both unfinished. In the former of these, a glowing panegyric of nature, Novalis veiled in poetry his own initiation at Freiberg into the wonders of natural science, under the famous geologist A. G. Werner. *Heinrich von Ofterdingen* is Novalis's chief work and, in many respects, the representative novel of Romanticism. Like all the romances of the School, its model is *Wilhelm Meister;* but the materials out of which *Heinrich von Ofterdingen* is constructed are very different from the realities which, as Goethe once complained,[1] were all he had to work upon. The world of *Heinrich von Ofterdingen* is that dream-world of medievalism, which had first been opened up by *Franz Sternbalds Wanderungen;* in passing, however, through Novalis's fine imagination, it has become spiritualised: "Die Welt wird Traum, der Traum wird Welt."[2] Heinrich von Ofterdingen, whose childhood has been spent in Eisenach, accompanies his mother on a visit to his grandfather in Augsburg. This journey, in the course of which they are joined by merchants who discuss literature and art with them, is the beginning of Heinrich's apprenticeship to poetry. In Augsburg, he chooses the poet Klingsohr as his master, and from Klingsohr learns the Romantic mysteries of poetry; he loves Klingsohr's daughter, Mathilde, as the author himself had loved Sophie von Kühn. Mathilde dies, and, like Novalis, Heinrich too finds consolation in a new love. The essential difference between Wilhelm Meister and Heinrich von Ofterdingen is the latter's self-reliance: he is not a blind seeker after the true path of his existence; he begins life as a poet, and with the clear consciousness that he has to find the wonderful "blue flower," in which the ideals and yearnings of Romanticism were symbolised. Disenchantments such as Meister had, Heinrich has not; he sets out to find no asses, but a kingdom, and at the unwritten close of the book, was to have entered into

Heinrich von Ofterdingen, 1802.

[1] *Goethes Unterhaltungen mit dem Kanzler F. von Müller*, 2nd ed., Stuttgart, 1898, 96.

[2] *Schriften*, I, 161.

possession of his inheritance. *Heinrich von Ofterdingen* is more of a poetic "Märchen" than a novel; as Novalis himself once described it to Tieck, it is an "apotheosis of poetry"; and like Tieck's Romantic poems, but in a higher degree, it is suffused with the unreal light of a purely imaginary world. "Die Scheidewand zwischen Fabel und Wahrheit, zwischen Vergangenheit und Gegenwart ist eingefallen: Glauben, Phantasie und Poesie schliessen die innerste Welt auf."[1]

The philosophical background.

The Romantic literature was far from being an isolated phenomenon in the intellectual movement of its time; on the contrary, philosophy and poetry were never so intimately associated as in the period under consideration. The poetry of the Romantic school was the efflorescence of a spiritual revival, whose leaders were Fichte, Schelling, and Schleiermacher. Of these, Fichte has already been discussed as the champion of the individualism on which the movement was based. But the Romantic philosopher *par excellence* was F. W. J. von Schelling (1775-1854),[2] whose influence on German intellectual life was hardly less widespread than that of Hegel or Schopenhauer. A native of Würtemberg, Schelling was born in 1775, and after studying at Tübingen and Leipzig, was appointed Professor of Philosophy at Jena in 1798. He subsequently occupied chairs in Würzburg, Munich, and Berlin, where he died in 1854. The most suggestive and fruitful of his writings are *Ideen zu einer Philosophie der Natur* (1797), *Von der Weltseele* (1798), *System des transcendentalen Idealismus* (1800). The reconciling spirit, which, as we have seen, is characteristic of Romantic literature, is by Schelling carried over into philosophy. While Spinoza discovered the mystery of the universe in an all-pervading divine spirit, Schelling, whose thought, after all, has many points of contact with Spinoza's, regarded nature and spirit as but two aspects of the "Weltseele." The fundamental conception of his philosophy is stated in the words, "die Natur soll der sichtbare Geist, der Geist die unsichtbare Natur seyn"; and the proof of the dogma lies "in der absoluten Identität des Geistes in uns und der Natur ausser uns."[3] Such a philosophy as Schelling's, when followed out to its logical conclusions, can only

F. W. J. von Schelling, 1775-1854.

[1] Tieck's *Nachwort zum Ofterdingen* (Novalis, *Schriften*, 1), 190.

[2] *Sämmtliche Werke*, 14 vols., Stuttgart, 1856-61. Cp. K. Fischer, *Schellings Leben, Werke und Lehre*, 2nd ed., Heidelberg, 1897.

[3] *Ideen zu einer Philosophie der Natur* (*Werke*, 2), 56.

lead to mysticism. But congenial as were these mystic tendencies to the Romantic School, Schelling's chief service to the movement was in bringing the æsthetic theories of Romanticism to a focus. Schelling proclaimed art as the highest of all phenomena, for here alone was to be found that perfect blending of nature and spirit which he sought; art to him was the great harmonising medium, in which the contradictions of life and thought, nature and history, entirely disappeared. Another prominent member of the Romantic School was Schelling's Scandinavian apostle, Henrik Steffens (1773-1845), who, attracted by Schelling's reputation, went to Jena in 1798, to study under him. Neither Steffens' scientific and philosophic work nor his long-forgotten Norwegian "Novellen" demand notice in a history of German literature, but, in 1840, he published under the title *Was ich erlebte*, ten volumes of autobiography, which afford an excellent commentary on the literature of the Romantic period.

Henrik Steffens, 1773-1845.

What Schelling did for the philosophy and æsthetics of Romanticism, Friedrich E. D. Schleiermacher (1768-1834)[1] did for its spiritual ideas. The latter found the life and religion of his time separated from each other, even in open conflict; and he made it his task to reconcile them. He forced the conviction upon his nation that religion was not a dry system of dogmas, but, in the first instance, a personal matter, and only another name for higher feelings and aspirations; religion was the true poetry of the soul. With his *Reden über die Religion* (1799) and his *Monologe* (1800), two books which ring in the intellectual life of the new century, Schleiermacher awakened the religious consciousness of the German people from the torpor into which it had sunk under the long reign of the "Aufklärung." When, however, this quickening of religion was reinforced by the mysticism of Schelling and the medievalism of Tieck and Novalis, the resulting product was rather a revival of Catholicism than a deepening of Protestantism.

F. E. D. Schleiermacher, 1768-1834.

[1] *Sämmtliche Werke*, 30 vols., Berlin, 1836-65. Cp. W. Dilthey, *Leben Schleiermachers*, I, Berlin, 1870.

CHAPTER II.

ROMANTIC DRAMA AND PATRIOTIC LYRIC.

Romanticism unfavourable to the drama.

THE drama was the stepchild of Romanticism; the Romantic writers found the lyric, the novel, and even, in Slavonic literatures, the epic, congenial channels for their ideas, but in Denmark perhaps alone did the Romantic drama stand on a footing of equality with other forms of expression. It has already been seen from Tieck's works with what difficulty the Romantic spirit adapted itself to the requirements of the theatre. The passivity of the Romantic creed on the one hand, and, on the other, its passionate craving to break down the boundaries between the arts, between art and literature, between life and literature, between nature and art, were anything but favourable to the development of a literary form which can only flourish in obedience to laws and draw nourishment from an active conception of existence. In the pre-Romantic days of "Sturm und Drang," a living drama was still possible, for life was then regarded as action; the "Stürmer und Dränger" scorned the rules of dramatic construction even more heartily than their successors, but they firmly believed in the "mighty deed." When, however, we turn to the Romantic School with its essentially lyric ideals of poetry, its preference for the passive aspects of life, we find the drama reduced to a mere shadow of its true self. It is significant that the greatest of all the Romantic dramatists, Heinrich von Kleist, wrote his masterpieces under the influence of the patriotism kindled in German minds by the tyranny of Napoleon.

If Tieck be left out of consideration, the most exclusively Romantic playwright of this age, and the only one who can

be compared with Kleist, was F. L. Zacharias Werner.[1] Born in Königsberg in 1788, Werner led a strange, unbalanced life; his biography reminds us of Goethe's characterisation of J. G. Günther, "Er wusste sich nicht zu zähmen, und so zerrann ihm sein Leben wie sein Dichten."[2] But it is only fair to recognise that Werner was cursed with a temperament which made him seem on the brink of insanity; mental disease alone can explain the helpless fashion in which he tossed from one extreme of the wildest debauchery to another of the most fervid piety. His dissolute, unsettled life at last found rest in the bosom of the Catholic Church, he became a priest, and, in their day, his sermons were even more popular than his plays. He died in Vienna in 1823. Werner's first drama, *Die Söhne des Thales*, was in two parts, *Die Templer auf Cypern* (1803) and *Die Kreuzes-Brüder* (1804), each six acts long. Both are mystic and symbolic, and, notwithstanding the author's love for crass, theatrical effects, have as little dramatic life as any of Tieck's dramas. The subject is the fall of the Order of Templars and the establishment of a new order, the "Sons of the Valley," in its place; the work is thus one of those allegories based on freemasonry, in which the later eighteenth century took so warm an interest. The first part of what was intended as a cycle of dramas on Prussian history, *Das Kreuz an der Ostsee* (1806), shows, if we overlook the flimsy texture of many scenes, the influence of Schiller's rigorous dramatic *technique*. The chief success of Werner's life was, however, *Martin Luther, oder die Weihe der Kraft* (1807), a drama, the subject of which is Luther's life between 1520 and 1525, Katharina von Bora, who is made to resemble a Catholic saint, being the heroine. As a historical drama, *Martin Luther* has little value; it is effectively constructed, and in some of the scenes there is a mystic and Romantic beauty; but Werner was already too much of a Catholic himself and too strongly in sympathy with the movement in favour of reconciling Protestantism and Catholicism, to do Luther justice. In 1814, after having finally renounced Protestantism, he published a repudiation of

Zacharias Werner, 1768-1823.

Die Söhne des Thales, 1803-4.

Martin Luther, 1807.

[1] *Ausgewählte Schriften*, 15 vols., Grimma, 1840-41; cp. *Das Schicksalsdrama*, edited by J. Minor (D.N.L., 151 [1884]), 1 ff.; also J. Minor, *Die Schicksalstragödie in ihren Hauptvertretern*, Frankfurt, 1883, and F. Poppenberg, *Zacharias Werner*, Berlin, 1893.

[2] *Dichtung und Wahrheit*, Book 7 (*Werke*, 27), 81.

this drama, a half-lyrical, half-allegorical poem, *Die Weihe der Unkraft*. His later dramas, *Attila* (1808), *Wanda* (1810), and *Die Mutter der Makkabäer* (1820), are, without exception, inferior to his earlier works.

Der vierundzwanzigste Februar, 1810.

Werner was also the author of a one-act tragedy, *Der vierundzwanzigste Februar* — produced on the 24th of February, 1810, and published in 1815 — which was of more moment for the history of the German drama than any other drama of its time. *Der vierundzwanzigste Februar* is the first of those "Schicksalstragödien," which, in the course of the following decade, flooded the German stage. The ultimate origin of this type of play is to be sought in Greek tragedy, but a less distant model was an English drama, *The Fatal Curiosity*, by George Lillo, the same Lillo who inspired *Miss Sara Sampson*. As early as 1781, *The Fatal Curiosity* had been adapted to the German stage by K. P. Moritz, under the title *Blunt*, but the time was not then propitious to the idea behind the play. More than ten years afterwards, Tieck, just emerging as an author, wrote two "fate" tragedies, *Der Abschied* and *Karl von Berneck;* but it was *Die Braut von Messina* which gave the "Schicksalsdrama" its decisive impulse, and prepared the way for the work of Werner, Müllner, and Houwald. Schiller's tragedy, however, lacked two features essential to the real "fate tragedy"; in the latter, not only did a curse or a prophesied fate hang over the doomed family, but that fate was associated with a definite day and with some fatal requisite, usually a dagger. Werner chose the 24th of February—a date that had played a mysterious *rôle* in his own life—as the critical day for the Swiss family whose tragic history he unrolls with such a command of weird effects. Slight as it is, *Der vierundzwanzigste Februar* is Werner's masterpiece.

The "Schicksalstragödie."

Adolf Müllner, 1774-1829.

The success of *Der vierundzwanzigste Februar* tempted Adolf Müllner (1774-1829),[1] an advocate of Weissenfels, who had hitherto written several comedies on French lines, for an amateur theatre in Weissenfels, to follow in Werner's footsteps. In 1812, Müllner wrote, with the obvious intention of surpassing his predecessor, *Der neunundzwanzigste Februar*, a play which contains horrors in plenty, but little real tragedy. Müllner's model, it is true, was also not free from this fault,

[1] *Dramatische Werke*, 8 vols., Brunswick, 1828; cp. D.N.L., 151, 293 ff.

but Werner was poet enough to be able to some extent to justify his means; in Müllner, on the other hand, there was little of the poet; he loved the horrible for its own sake. In the following year, Müllner's best-known play, *Die Schuld*, was produced in Vienna, and was soon to be seen in all German theatres. The plot of this typical "Schicksalstragödie" is laid in Spain; it is the familiar story of a young man, who, according to a prophecy, is destined to kill his brother. To defeat the ends of fate, his mother brings him up in the north of Europe. Years later, he returns to Spain, loves a certain Elvira, and, in order to be able to marry her, kills her husband while they are hunting together, the dead man proving, of course, to be his brother. Although an indifferent drama from a poetic point of view, *Die Schuld* is skilfully put together: as has been well said, it is the work of a criminal jurist; but the gulf that separates it from the greatest of all the "Schicksalsdramen," from Grillparzer's *Ahnfrau* (1817), a play to which *Die Schuld* bequeathed at least its trochaic measure, is a wide one. Of Müllner's other tragedies, *König Yngurd* (1817), for the hero of which Napoleon evidently lent some traits, is noticeable as an attempt to write a classical iambic tragedy—although, after all, *König Yngurd* also is essentially a "fate drama"—and in *Die Albaneserin* (1820), his next work, he endeavours to rival Houwald in a sentimental style that was foreign to his temperament. After this play, Müllner wrote no more for the stage, and, in his later years, devoted himself entirely to journalism.

Die Schuld, 1813.

C. E. von Houwald (1778-1845),[1] the only other "fate dramatist" whose name finds a place in literary history, was the least gifted of the three. He continued the line of homely, mediocre pieces which had been begun by the early Saxon playwrights; in other words, he supplied the German stage with the kind of play which, in the generation before him, C. F. Weisse had written with so little effort. Houwald's own tastes were sentimental; the gruesome had little attraction for him; consequently his imitation of the dramatic methods of Werner and Müllner is artificial, and sometimes even ludicrous. His two best-known pieces, *Das Bild* and *Der Leuchtthurm*, both published in 1821, are examples of the "Schicksalstragödie" in its decline.

C. E. von Houwald, 1778-1845.

[1] *Sämmtliche Werke*, 5 vols., Leipzig, 1851. Cp. D.N.L., 151, 457 ff.

Heinrich von Kleist, 1777-1811.

A poet of a very different order from these "fate dramatists" was Bernd Heinrich Wilhelm von Kleist,[1] the most original dramatist that North Germany has ever produced. While the "Schicksalsdrama" harmonised with the passive intellectual temper of the German nation, as it lay humiliated at Napoleon's feet, the manlier genius of Kleist was fired by that patriotic spirit which burst forth irresistibly in the War of Liberation. Kleist is an enigmatic, even an unsympathetic, figure. Born at Frankfort-on-the-Oder, on October 18, 1777, he grew up in military surroundings which were even more distasteful to him than they had been to the Kleist who wrote *Der Frühling*. Restless, dissatisfied with the career that had been chosen for him, haunted by woes real and imaginary, Kleist wandered to Paris, and from Paris to Switzerland, so that the new century had begun before he had made any definite plans for his future, or even realised that he was a poet. His first work, *Die Familie Schroffenstein* (1803), is an expression of the discord that existed in the poet's own nature; it contains, in concentrated form, Kleist's "Sturm und Drang." Questions hurled in the face of Destiny, doubts of the goodness of Providence, idyllic charm and crude Romantic horrors—the latter suggestive of the coming "Fate drama"—these are the characteristics of *Die Familie Schroffenstein*. But there is much rugged, untutored strength in the drama, and its primitive, unreflecting ethics recalls Kleist's model, Shakespeare, rather than the national dramatist Schiller. *Amphitryon* (1807), a version of Molière's comedy of that name, in the style and spirit of the "Romantik," was Kleist's next published work. But at this time he was chiefly occupied with *Robert Guiskard*, a drama in which he set before himself the aim of Schiller's later dramas, namely, a union of ancient tragedy with the Shakespearian drama of character. Disheartened, however, with the progress of *Robert Guiskard*, he destroyed his manuscript, and only a few fragments have been preserved. In 1808, *Penthesilea* appeared, and was received with scant approval by the reading world. Yet this play contains some of Kleist's most subtle poetry; here we find for the first time that intensity of feeling characteristic of the poet's best work, and the unrelieved grimness of his tragic conflicts. *Penthesilea*

Die Familie Schroffenstein, 1803.

Amphitryon, 1807.

Penthesilea, 1808.

[1] *Sämmtliche Werke*, edited by T. Zolling, 4 vols. (D.N.L., 149-150 [1885]). Cp. O. Brahm, *Heinrich von Kleist*, 3rd ed., Berlin, 1892.

is not a regular tragedy; it is not divided, or even divisible, into acts. It contains only a single conflict, that between Achilles and the Amazonian queen, who slays Achilles, in the belief that he scorns her love; but the intensity of Penthesilea's hate and scorn is superhuman. At the same time, the drama aims, outwardly at least, at the ideal which the poet of *Robert Guiskard* had kept before him; it is a picture of the Homeric age seen by the lurid light of Romanticism.

Der zerbrochene Krug, 1808.

On the 2nd of March, 1808, Kleist's one-act comedy, *Der zerbrochene Krug*, was produced without success in Weimar. Goethe, who divided it into three acts, may, as Kleist himself thought, have been to blame for the failure, but it was more likely due to the unusual character of the play. Written round a picture of the Dutch School, *Der zerbrochene Krug* is itself such a picture. It is an unpretentious description of a village trial over a broken jar; the incident nearly separates two lovers and ends by unmasking the village judge as the real delinquent. *Der zerbrochene Krug* is thus a drama with little progressive action; but it contains a series of clearly cut dramatic portraits, full of humour and character, which are alone sufficient to make it one of the masterpieces of German comedy.

Käthchen von Heilbronn, 1810.

Das Käthchen von Heilbronn, oder die Feuerprobe (1810), is Kleist's most popular drama. The author describes it as "ein grosses historisches Ritterschauspiel," that is to say, it is a "Ritterdrama" of the later "Sturm und Drang" placed in a Romantic *milieu*. The rattle of arms and the clank of horses' feet re-echo through the play; a scene before the "Vehmgericht" recalls *Götz von Berlichingen;* noble knights and ladies, the Kaiser himself, add historical colouring to the picture, and amidst the medieval paraphernalia stands the charming figure of Käthchen:—

"Ging sie in ihrem bürgerlichen Schmuck über die Strasse, den Strohhut auf, von gelbem Lack erglänzend, das schwarzsammtene Leibchen, das ihre Brust umschloss, mit feinen Silberkettlein behängt, so lief es flüsternd von allen Fenstern herab: das ist das Käthchen von Heilbronn; das Käthchen von Heilbronn, ihr Herren, als ob der Himmel von Schwaben sie erzeugt, und von seinem Kuss geschwängert, die Stadt, die unter ihm liegt, sie geboh[illegible] hätte."[1]

[1] Act 1, scene 1 (T. Zolling's edition, 3, 5).

This simple Swabian girl is bewitched with love for a knight, Wetter vom Strahl; she follows him like a dog, sleeps with his horse, and is ready to obey his lightest wish. Käthchen's presumptive father, an armourer in Heilbronn, accuses Wetter vom Strahl before the Holy Vehm of being a sorcerer, but Käthchen's words convince the judges of his innocence. In the burning castle of Thurneck she undergoes the "Feuerprobe" for him, and ultimately saves him from a marriage with the false Kunigunde von Thurneck. The Kaiser recognises in her his own daughter, whereupon she becomes the wife of the Ritter vom Strahl. The drama itself, if the vigorous Shakespearian speech be excepted, is not a good example of Kleist's powers, or even of the "Ritterdrama"; the scenes are loosely connected and the action is weakened by irrelevant episodes; but Kleist has expended all his wealth of poetry upon his heroine. He has written stronger scenes, but none more beautiful than that in the fourth act, where Käthchen sleeps under the elder-tree.

Michael Kohlhaas, 1810.

In the same year as *Käthchen von Heilbronn* appeared the powerful romance, *Michael Kohlhaas*, the first and most ambitious of a series of eight *Erzählungen*, which were published in two volumes in 1810 and the following year. Except for a concession to the Romantic taste of the time towards the close of the novel, *Michael Kohlhaas* is a masterpiece of straightforward, realistic narrative; no other German story of its age is still, at the beginning of the twentieth century, so modern in its ideas and point of view. Kohlhaas is a law-abiding horse-dealer of the sixteenth century, whose horses are illegally detained and misused by a nobleman. He first seeks legal means of redress, but the law supports the law-breaker; nothing is to be obtained by peaceful means. Justice, however, Kohlhaas is resolved to have, even though he devotes his life to that object. With cool but grim determination he sets to work, and does not rest until he has involved the country in the terrors of a civil war. But he gains his end; his horses are returned to him in the condition in which they were taken from him; and he himself lays his head upon the block as a rebel and a criminal, with the consciousness that he has helped to lessen the injustice of the world. The spirit that breathes through *Michael Kohlhaas* is very different from the mysticism of

Tieck and Werner. Crushed under the heel of Napoleon, the German peoples were beginning to waken to a sense of national pride; the Napoleonic invasion had rudely shaken them out of their Romantic dreams. They saw that high ideals alone are not sufficient to make a nation great; they must first be converted into deeds. Although the revolt against Napoleon had little in common with the passive unworldliness of the Romantic School, it was, none the less, a natural development of the individualistic trend in Romanticism; unmistakable in *Michael Kohlhaas*, the national spirit appears still more plainly in Kleist's next work, *Die Hermannsschlacht*, which was written in 1808, but not published until 1821.

Die Hermannsschlacht (1808, 1821).

Die Hermannsschlacht is a tragedy of that full-blooded hate which the poets of the Renaissance could describe so well. Klopstock, it will be remembered, once vainly tried to give dramatic life to the defeat of Varus and his Roman legions in the year 9, by Arminius or Hermann. Kleist is more successful, although hardly more faithful to history, than Klopstock; only the intensity of the passions in *Die Hermannsschlacht* is primitive; in other respects, the play is a manifesto of German patriotism. Rome is France, and the land of the Cheruskians Germany, Kleist concerning himself as little with archæological accuracy here as in *Käthchen von Heilbronn*. More serious flaws are the unheroic craftiness of Hermann and the brutality of Thusnelda's revenge on the Roman legate, Ventidius. But, as the German people realised when the drama was revived after the Franco-German War, its magnificent patriotism atones for the unevenness in its composition. Of the many attempts in German literature to make Arminius a dramatic hero, none comes within measurable distance of this.

Der Prinz von Homburg (1810, 1821).

Kleist's last drama, *Der Prinz von Homburg* (1810), maintains the highest level of all his works. He again takes a poet's licence in not adhering rigidly to the traditions—at best somewhat apocryphal—of Prince Friedrich of Homburg, who, in 1675, gained the victory of Fehrbellin in disobedience to the Elector of Brandenburg's orders; but he has created an admirable historical drama, the only great historical drama of which Prussia can boast. Condemned by a court-martial, Prince Friedrich shows a cowardly fear of death: the Elector

refuses to listen, not only to the intercession of his niece Nathalie, who loves the Prince, but even to that of the whole army. He places the decision in the Prince's own hands, whereupon Friedrich again becomes a man; he recognises the justice of his sentence, and, by doing so, wins the Elector's pardon. Characters like the Kurfürst and the "alte Kottwitz," are masterly examples of dramatic portraiture, while the battle scenes are modelled on those in Shakespeare's histories. The Prince of Homburg is the most convincing of Kleist's male figures, and one that is not unworthy to stand beside Grillparzer's heroes. In his other plays, Kleist is always something of an idealist; he loved to project, as upon a screen, his own dreams. Käthchen, for instance, is little else than an ideal love of his brain; the Ritter vom Strahl is less Kleist as he was, than the man the poet aspired to be. But the problematical Prince of Homburg *is* Kleist; like his hero, Kleist was at the mercy of the conflicts in his soul; he, too, was half a hero, half a coward; at one time a dreamer, at another a man of daring action; and in this, his last drama, he was unquestionably truest to human nature.

But upon Kleist lay the disease of the age; the inward harmony of mind and soul, which he always hoped to attain, was denied him. From the beginning, his life was a tragedy to him; tragic was the long pursuit of a happiness that seemed to recede as he approached it; his unhappy love was tragic; the lack of recognition, especially on the part of Goethe, whose commendation would have outweighed a nation's applause, most tragic of all. And so, one November afternoon in 1811, the most gifted dramatist of Northern Germany shot himself on the shores of the Wannsee, near Potsdam, having just completed his thirty-fourth year.

The disasters of Napoleon's Russian campaign, followed by the King of Prussia's appeal to his people on March 17, 1813, gave the signal for a general uprising against the oppressor. The patriotism which was struggling for expression in works like the *Hermannsschlacht*, suddenly burst into action; the nation showed that it had not listened in vain to Kant's lofty moralising and Fichte's stirring addresses; indeed, never before in its history did the German people feel and act with such complete unanimity as at this time. And their

fervid patriotism resulted in a lyric outburst which, for a time, pressed the Romantic poetry of sentiment into the background. Foremost among these patriotic singers stand Körner, Arndt, and Schenkendorf. Patriotic Lyric.

Karl Theodor Körner (1791-1813),[1] whose heroic death in the ranks of Lützow's volunteer corps made him a popular hero, was a son of C. G. Körner, Schiller's friend. Although only twenty-three at his death, he had won a certain reputation as dramatist, his best play, *Zriny*, having been produced in Vienna at the end of 1812. But Körner wrote too hastily; his dramas are now forgotten, and he is remembered only as a patriotic singer. In 1810, he published his first volume of poems, *Knospen*, which neither attracted, nor deserved to attract, much attention. After his death, however, his father collected his patriotic poetry, under the title *Leyer und Schwerdt* (1814), and this was received with enthusiasm: to Körner's contemporaries, his songs were triumphant battle-cries; they came from the heart of a soldier and appealed to a people whose hopes were with its soldiers. But looked at from a critical standpoint, the lyrics of *Leyer und Schwerdt* have few of the qualities of good poetry, and what, at the beginning of the century, was regarded as a faithful expression of national heroism, often seems to the modern reader merely rhetoric and bombast. K. T. Körner, 1791-1813.

A more influential, and, at the same time, older and riper, poet than the heroic young soldier of *Leyer und Schwerdt* is Ernst Moritz Arndt (1769-1860).[2] Arndt may be regarded as the leading singer of the "Befreiungskrieg"; to him we owe, on the whole, the best patriotic lyrics of the period. The strength of Arndt's poetry lies in the skill with which he conforms to the spirit of the Volkslied and in the earnest spiritual tone which pervades his verse; his best songs stand in a direct line of descent from the political "Volkslieder" of the Thirty Years' War. By temperament, Arndt was a sturdy North German; his Christianity, which reminds us of Luther's, was sincere and manly. His writings, prose as well as verse, reflect the essentially religious character of E. M. Arndt, 1769-1860.

[1] *Werke*, edited by A. Stern, 3 vols. (D.N.L., 152, 153 [1890-99]). Cp. W. E. Peschel and E. Wildenow, *Theodor Körner*, Leipzig, 1898.

[2] *Werke*, ed. H. Meisner, 6 vols., Berlin, 1892-95; a few of his lyrics in M. Mendheim's *Lyriker und Epiker der klassischen Periode*, 3 (D.N.L., 135, 3 [1893]), 303 ff.

the German revolt against Napoleon. To Arndt, as to his fellow-poets, the war was a holy war :—

" Frischauf, ihr teutschen Schaaren !
Frischauf zum heil'gen Krieg !
Gott wird sich offenbaren
Im Tode und im Sieg.
Mit Gott, dem Frommen, Starken,
Seyd fröhlich und geschwind,
Kämpft für des Landes Marken,
Für Ältern, Weib und Kind."

And it was Arndt who wrote the famous lines :—

" Der Gott, der Eisen wachsen liess,
Der wollte keine Knechte."[1]

His writings bear constant witness to his familiarity with the Bible ; his language is Biblical ; his God is a Jehovah, a God of battles ; but, like Luther, he sees this Jehovah at the same time through the eyes of an exclusively German temperament. The following verse from Arndt's stirring song on the *Leipziger Schlacht* (1813) shows how much his patriotism owed to the Old Testament :—

" Wem ward der Sieg in dem harten Streit ?
Wer griff den Preis mit der Eisenhand ?
Die Wälschen hat Gott wie die Spreu zerstreut,
Die Wälschen hat Gott verweht wie den Sand ;
Viele Tausende decken den grünen Rasen,
Die übrig geblieben, entflohen wie Hasen,
Napoleon mit."[2]

Arndt's poems appeared in various collections (*Gedichte*, 1803 ; *Lieder für Teutsche*, 1813 ; *Bannergesänge und Wehrlieder*, 1813) before, in 1818, they were collected in two volumes as *Gedichte*.[3]

Geist der Zeit, 1806-18.

As a prose writer, Arndt takes an even higher position than as a poet. His *Geist der Zeit*, of which the first volume was published in 1806, the fourth and last in 1818, is one of the outstanding German books of the beginning of the century. This work, with its hatred of Napoleon, its vigorous endeavour to awaken the nation's conscience, and, in the later volumes, its conviction that Germany would one day

[1] *Gedichte*, Frankfort, 1818, 2, 64 and 95 (edition of 1860, 212 and 228).
[2] *Ibid.*, 2, 218. Cp. edition of 1860, 276.
[3] *Gedichte*, von E. M. Arndt (Vollständige Sammlung), Berlin, 1860.

be united, helped to lay the foundations of the new political *régime*. Besides the *Geist der Zeit*, Arndt wrote a large number of "Flugschriften," which stirred up his countrymen no less effectively than his songs. All his prose—and his works include, in addition to those mentioned, many volumes of travel and reminiscence, which read as vividly to-day as when they were written—is strong and vigorous, and bears the stamp, rarer in German than in English literature, of the language of the Bible.

The hope of seeing Germany united under a single ruler, although to some extent associated with the national revolt against Napoleon, received little encouragement as long as the nation had not regained its freedom. In the lyrics of Max von Schenkendorf (1783-1817), one of the poets of the "Befreiungskrieg," however, there are frequent references to the hoped-for revival of the German medieval empire. Schenkendorf's temperament was less aggressive than that of either Körner or Arndt. He did not live so much in the moment; he reflected more, and, like the Romanticists, to whom he has many points of resemblance, he was fond of dwelling on the glories of the middle ages. Schenkendorf's *Gedichte*,[1] which were collected in 1815, are rarely as stimulating and vigorous as Arndt's or Körner's, but they have a higher value as lyric poetry. If Arndt was the greatest force in this era of national revolt, Schenkendorf was its most gifted poet.

M. von Schenkendorf, 1783-1817.

These were the chief singers who were inspired by the War of Liberation; but almost all the German poets whose youth fell in this age contributed to the lyric of revolt. In 1814, Friedrich Rückert (1788-1866), to whom we shall return in a later chapter, wrote his *Geharnischte Sonette* and *Kriegerische Spott- und Ehrenlieder*, which awakened almost as warm a response as Arndt's songs; and in Hoffmann von Fallersleben's (1798-1874) *Lieder und Romanzen* (1821), there is still an echo to be heard of the struggle for freedom. An important sign of the times was that the younger Romanticists shared the national enthusiasm: Arnim and Brentano both wrote patriotic songs, while in journals and pamphlets, Görres, as well as Arnim, fought for German independence.

F. Rückert, 1788-1866.

Hoffmann von Fallersleben, 1798-1874.

[1] Ed. A. Hagen, 5th ed., Stuttgart, 1878; also in Reclam's *Universal-Bibliothek*, 377-379, Leipzig, 1871. Cp. M. Mendheim, *l.c.*, 3, 362 ff.

As far as actual records are concerned, Napoleon's influence on German literature is thus to be sought in a few volumes of stirring lyrics and a tragedy such as the *Hermannsschlacht*, results which were hardly proportionate to the importance which the War of Liberation had for the national life. But Germany's debt to Napoleon—in Austria, as we shall see in a subsequent chapter, the conditions were, in some respects, otherwise—manifested itself indirectly. Napoleon awoke the Romantic writers from their indifference to the questions and interests of their own time; he brought them into touch with the life around them, gave them a sense of patriotism, which carried the influence of the original Romantic ideas far into the nineteenth century. There had always been a danger lest Romanticism with its high, unworldly dreams should become completely divorced from the national life, and that its fertilising stream should lose itself in the sands of Catholicism and medievalism, and this danger was not wholly averted by the Napoleonic invasion; but the best elements in the Romantic movement were won over for the national cause. Until the rise of "Young Germany," Napoleon and the revolt against him were the motive forces in German literature, and they showed themselves not so much in the creation of a new literature, or new forms of literature, as in the deepening and strengthening of Romanticism.

CHAPTER III.

GOETHE'S LATER YEARS.

GOETHE'S life falls naturally into three main sections: his youth, ending with his arrival in Weimar; his early manhood and middle age, which extended from 1774 to Schiller's death; and a third and last division, from 1805 to 1832. This final period of the poet's life, which belongs exclusively to the nineteenth century, has now to be considered.[1] When Goethe was last discussed in these pages, he had, it will be remembered, accomplished the classical stage in his development which began with *Iphigenie* and *Tasso* and culminated in the *Achilleis* and *Pandora*. In 1808, the First Part of *Faust* appeared, and *Faust* established Goethe's reputation in the eyes not only of Germany, but of the world, as the greatest poet of his time and nation. Before the publication of this work, however, a change had come over the social and political condition of Germany; the nation, suddenly roused from its Romantic dreaming by foreign invasion, was forced to regard itself no longer as a group of principalities basking under an enlightened government and aiming at universal peace and goodwill, but as the enemy of a neighbouring state. Goethe, however, was too much a child of the eighteenth century to sympathise with the new spirit in politics; as a politician, he remained to the last a citizen of Europe, of the Europe previous to the French Revolution; and, conscious of this lack of harmony between his own ideas and those of the new time, he wisely held aloof from political affairs. For Napoleon Goethe always retained a warm admiration. In 1806, when the French invested Weimar, simply

Goethe and Napoleon.

[1] Cp. O. Harnack, *Goethe in der Epoche seiner Vollendung*, 1805-32, 2nd ed., Leipzig, 1901.

because the Duke had remained loyal to the King of Prussia, his comrade in arms, he expressed himself, it is true, with great bitterness: this was the time when, in view of the general insecurity of life and property, he had his marriage with Christiane Vulpius legally solemnised, in order that neither she nor his son should suffer in the event of his death. But the danger passed over, and when, in the next few years, Napoleon swept triumphantly across Europe, the poet was deeply impressed by the "man of destiny." Goethe had complete faith in Napoleon, and although French rule on German soil was distasteful to him, he regarded it as preferable to the alternative he feared, a Slavonic invasion from the East; and, in 1808, he stood face to face with Napoleon at Erfurt, when the latter addressed the poet in the oft-quoted words, "Vous êtes un homme!" Even when the first blow fell on Napoleon, before Moscow, and fortune at last deserted him, Goethe had no words of encouragement for the German people. "Schüttelt nur an Euren Ketten!" he said to Körner and Arndt in April, 1813, "der Mann ist Euch zu gross, Ihr werdet sie nicht zerbrechen!"[1] Not until Napoleon's power was actually broken had Goethe any hope of the success of the German revolt; then he, too, showed that he could rejoice. In his fine "Festspiel," *Des Epimenides Erwachen* (1814), there are lines of fervid patriotism.

Of Goethe's life in the years after Schiller's death there is little to say. His first impulse had been to complete his friend's unfinished tragedy *Demetrius;* but he soon found that this plan was impracticable without remodelling the whole drama from the beginning. In a magnificent *Epilog zu Schillers Glocke* (1806), however, he paid Schiller perhaps the noblest tribute ever paid by one poet to another:—

Epilog zu Schillers Glocke, 1806.

> Denn er war unser! Mag das stolze Wort
> Den lauten Schmerz gewaltig übertönen!
> Er mochte sich bey uns, im sichern Port,
> Nach wildem Sturm zum Dauernden gewöhnen.
> Indessen schritt sein Geist gewaltig fort
> In's Ewige des Wahren, Guten, Schönen,
> Und hinter ihm, in wesenlosem Scheine,
> Lag, was uns alle bändigt, das Gemeine.[2]

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[1] *Erinnerungen aus dem äusseren Leben von E. M. Arndt*, ed. H. Rösch, Leipzig, 1892, 180.

[2] *Werke*, 16, 166.

In 1806, Christiane became "Geheimrätin von Goethe." In the following year, Brentano's sister, Bettina, visited Weimar, and formed a warm friendship with the poet which was kept up by letter for five years. This is the correspondence which Bettina wove into what might be described as an autobiographical novel, and published in 1835 as *Briefwechsel Goethes mit einem Kinde.* To the same period belongs also Goethe's affectionate interest in Minna Herzlieb, a foster-daughter of K. F. Frommann, a publisher in Jena; and to her he dedicated the majority of his *Sonette.* In 1807, the death of the Duchess Amalie threw a shadow over the Weimar Court, and, a year later, Goethe lost his mother.

Bettina von Arnim, 1785-1859.

In October, 1809, *Die Wahlverwandtschaften* appeared, the first important work of the last epoch of Goethe's life. Just as in earlier years *Werther* had been the "Befreiungsthat" by which the poet had freed himself from his passion for Charlotte Buff, *Die Wahlverwandtschaften* was now the poetic expression of his love for and renunciation of Minna Herzlieb. But *Die Wahlverwandtschaften* stands on an entirely different basis from that of *Werther;* it is not an undisciplined outpouring of the poet's personal feelings, but a novel of careful symmetry, and its moral problems are handled with a classic strength and ruthlessness. *Die Wahlverwandtschaften* is a psychological, even a pathological novel, a study of four people in their mutual relations to one another. Eduard and Charlotte have loved each other in youth and been separated by circumstances; each has married, but, now as widow and widower, they find each other again. Their marriage is not an unhappy one, although based on friendship rather than on love. Two new figures are introduced, a Hauptmann or Captain and Ottilie, Charlotte's foster-daughter. Goethe considers these four people as so many chemical elements with inherent, elective affinities; the Hauptmann and Charlotte are attracted to each other in spite of themselves, so also are Ottilie and Eduard. Charlotte's lover has the strength to renounce; Eduard demands a separation from his wife. But in the hopes that her child will bridge the gulf between her husband and herself, Charlotte opposes the separation. Eduard, becoming every day more deeply involved in his passion, goes abroad in order to forget Ottilie; he distinguishes himself by his bravery in battle, but

Die Wahlverwandtschaften, 1809.

without avail. Charlotte's child is born and bears testimony to the elective affinities of the parents, for it resembles both Ottilie and the Hauptmann. It is subsequently drowned through Ottilie's carelessness, and by this accident the girl's soul is suddenly awakened to moral consciousness. She realises that she can never become Eduard's wife, even should he be free to marry her. Her strength is not able to stand the shock; she takes ill and dies. And it is not long before the broken-hearted Eduard dies also.

"Es ist kein Strich in den *Wahlverwandtschaften*," said Goethe to Eckermann, "den ich nicht selbst erlebt habe; aber kein Strich so, wie er erlebt worden."[1] And, indeed, judged as an artistic treatment of subjective experiences, this novel might be called Goethe's masterpiece: it has none of the unrefined realism which characterises the "confessions" of the *Werther* period; nor, on the other hand, has the subject, like those of Goethe's classical dramas, compelled the poet to appear more objective than he actually was. Irrespective of its subjectivity, *Die Wahlverwandtschaften* is one of Goethe's most artistically satisfying works: no book of his has been more deeply influenced by those earnest conferences with Schiller on a classic literary art, which occupied both poets so exclusively in the later years of their friendship. Strictly speaking, however, this remarkable work is not a "Roman" or novel, but a "Novelle" or short story. Goethe originally intended it to be one of the stories which make up the volume of *Wilhelm Meisters Wanderjahre*, but it soon grew out of all proportion to the original plan. To a modern reader, the most serious flaws in the *Wahlverwandtschaften* are Ottilie's diary, which the poet has filled with his own wisdom, not his heroine's, and the odour of sanctity with which he surrounds her deathbed. But the diary was part of the heritage which the novelists of the eighteenth century left to their successors, and the Roman Catholic tendency shows, at least, that Goethe was sufficiently in touch with his younger contemporaries to understand and sympathise with the religious strain in the Romantic movement. *Die Wahlverwandtschaften* is a masterpiece of construction and proportion: although Goethe had reached his sixtieth year,

[1] J. P. Eckermann, *Gespräche mit Goethe* (Feb. 17, 1830), 2, 188. Cp. 2, 60.

the power of his genius was still unimpaired. And not only the *Wahlverwandtschaften*, but lively drinking songs like *Vanitas! vanitatum vanitas!* ("Ich hab mein Sach auf nichts gestellt"), ballads like *Johanna Sebus*, *Der Todtentanz*, *Der getreue Eckart*, even poems based on old Italian *novelle*, and full of the sunny, heathen naturalness of Ariosto,—all these prove that if the years had brought Goethe to maturity, they had not yet made him old.

Other more ambitious works were in preparation. To 1810 belongs the *Farbenlehre*, which is practically a continuation of the earlier *Beyträge zur Optik*. This attempt of Goethe's to overthrow the authority of Newton is usually looked upon as one of the few controversies in which the poet suffered defeat. To Newton's view of light and colour as wave-phenomena governed by mathematical laws, Goethe, who found one faithful supporter in the philosopher, Arthur Schopenhauer, opposed a "natural" theory, according to which colours are the result of varying mixtures of light and darkness. But to refute Newton properly, it would have been necessary to meet him on his own ground, and this Goethe was too ill-equipped with mathematical knowledge to attempt. At the same time, *Zur Farbenlehre* has value, even if only as a negative contribution to science: the treatise is an admirable example of scientific observation, of clear and careful description, of patient inquiry and experiment,—a book that even still has the power to help and stimulate the student of physical science.

Zur Farbenlehre, 1810.

In the following year, 1811, Goethe gave to the public the first volume of his autobiography under the title *Aus meinem Leben: Dichtung und Wahrheit;* the second volume was published in 1812, the third in 1814; the fourth, which continues the history of the poet's life as far as his arrival in Weimar, appeared posthumously in 1833. As fragments of what was to have been a continuation of *Dichtung und Wahrheit*, Goethe published, in 1816-17, his *Italiänische Reise*[1]; in 1822, *Die Campagne in Frankreich*, followed by *Die Belagerung von Mayntz* in 1829; to this year belongs also the *Zweyte römische Aufenthalt*, and to 1830, the *Tag- und Jahres-Hefte*. In *Dichtung und Wahrheit*, Goethe begins, it has been said, to grow old; he himself recognised the love of retrospect as a sign of ap-

Dichtung und Wahrheit, 1811-33.

[1] Edited by C. Schuchardt, 2 vols., Stuttgart, 1862.

proaching age. But the descriptions in *Dichtung und Wahrheit* of the poet's early life in Frankfort and of the "Sturm und Drang" are so vivid that the reader forgets they were written by a man of sixty. "Es sind lauter Resultate meines Lebens," said Goethe once of this work, "und die erzählten einzelnen Facta dienen bloss, um eine allgemeine Beobachtung, eine höhere Wahrheit zu bestätigen."[1] *Dichtung und Wahrheit* is an autobiography composed by an artist and interpreted by a philosopher; the facts of the narrative are the "Wahrheit," the subordination of the facts and events to an artistic plan according to which they are grouped and arranged, and to a philosophy which regards human life and effort with an almost fatalistic calm, as something foreordained—that is the "Dichtung." Far removed, as Goethe was, from the scenes which he described, he has not succeeded in conveying the "intensity" of his youth, but his genius gave him the power of suggesting objectively how intense his feelings had been. It only adds to the worth of *Dichtung und Wahrheit* that it should be tranquilly reflective instead of youthful and turbulent, and the exquisite beauty of the love episodes, especially that of which Friederike Brion is the heroine, is alone sufficient to place *Dichtung und Wahrheit* at the head of Goethe's achievements in sustained prose.

Goethe's later years.

Three masterpieces of the poet's last years still remain to be considered, *West-östlicher Divan* (1819), *Wilhelm Meisters Wanderjahre* (1821), and the Second Part of *Faust* (1833). But these works represent only a part of his many-sided activity at this time; he also edited a periodical publication, *Über Kunst und Alterthum* (1816-32), which with *Zur Naturwissenschaft überhaupt* (1817-24), and *Zur Morphologie* (1817-24), formed the repository for his most pregnant ideas. Above all, Goethe's interest in natural science seemed to increase as time went on, although it was tempered by a regret that he was unable to keep pace with its rapid advances.

Scientific interests.

"Wenn ich das neuste Vorschreiten der Naturwissenschaften betrachte," he wrote in 1826, "so komme ich mir vor wie ein Wandrer, der in der Morgendämmerung gegen Osten ging, das heranwachsende Licht mit Freuden anschaute und die

[1] J. P. Eckermann, *l.c.* (March 30, 1831), 2, 334.

Erscheinung des grossen Feuerballs mit Sehnsucht erwartete, aber doch bey dem Hervortreten desselben die Augen wegwenden musste, welche den gewünschten gehofften Glanz nicht ertragen konnten."[1]

Although, as far as his theory of colour and his "Neptunian" views on the origin of the earth's crust were concerned, he was left behind by the younger geologists, he was able to observe the effects of his theory of metamorphosis and development on the study of the organic sciences; and, more than twenty years after Goethe's death, Charles Darwin at last revealed the possibilities that lay hidden in the poet's theories—possibilities of which Goethe himself knew nothing. From his sixtieth year onwards, Weimar became a kind of literary Mecca, to which pilgrims from all lands came to pay homage to the greatest European man of letters; and he corresponded with the representative poets and scientists, not only of his own land but of France, Italy, and England. His *Tagebücher*, his correspondence, such as that with K. F. Zelter (6 vols., 1833-34), his conversations, above all, those recorded in the *Gespräche mit Goethe* (1837) by J. P. Eckermann (1792-1854) and in the *Unterhaltungen mit dem Kanzler Müller* (1870; 2nd ed., 1898), afford an extraordinarily complete picture of Goethe's old age.[2] To the last, he maintained an unflagging interest in all that happened in the world of literature, art, and science; he had words of kindly encouragement for the younger generation, and bestowed an attention upon leading foreign writers, on Byron, Carlyle, Béranger, Manzoni, which not unreasonably awakened jealousy in Germany. These manifold interests will be found recorded in the pages of *Über Kunst und Alterthum;* and here, too, are those thoughts on a "Weltlitteratur" which give the key to his magnificent cosmopolitism. The one-sidedness of his views on art as expressed in the *Propyläen*, is not insisted upon in *Über Kunst und Alterthum*, and he brought a warmer sympathy to bear on the artistic ideals of the Romanticists than it is usual to credit him with — the completion of Cologne Cathedral, and the art of Cornelius and Overbeck

Diaries, correspondence and conversations.

[1] Letter to K. G. Carus and E. J. d'Alton (Jan. 23, 1826). Cp. K. G. Carus, *Goethe: zu dessen näherem Verständniss*, Leipzig, 1843, 33 f.

[2] Goethe's *Tagebücher* form the third division of the Weimar edition, 1887 ff. The *Gespräche* have been collected by W. von Biedermann, 10 vols., Leipzig, 1889-96.

appealed to him strongly. When he made the oft-quoted remark to Eckermann, "Das Romantische nenne ich das Kranke, das Klassische das Gesunde,"[1] he did not mean that he was unable to appreciate what was really vital in the Romantic movement of the new century.

West-östlicher Divan, 1819.

For the idea of the *West-östliche Divan*, Goethe was indebted to the Viennese orientalist, Joseph von Hammer-Purgstall (1774-1856), whose voluminous writings on oriental literature and history opened up a new field to German poetry. In 1813-14, Hammer-Purgstall published a translation of the *Divan* of the Persian poet Hafiz, which attracted Goethe's attention. Meanwhile, the lyric chords in the poet's nature had been set vibrating by a new passion; his romantic, or, as it has well been called, "Renaissance" love for Marianne von Willemer, whom he met in the summer of 1814 and again in 1815, demanded lyric expression as fiercely as the passions of his younger days, and he poured the love-songs she inspired into the moulds of the Persian poet. *Der West-östliche Divan* is more western than eastern; it is, as Goethe described it in the sub-title of his MS., a "Versammlung deutscher Gedichte mit stetem Bezug auf den Divan des persischen Sängers Mahomed Schemfeddin Hafis." The collection is divided into twelve books of unequal length and unequal poetic worth, the best being the "Buch Suleika" and the "Schenkenbuch." An entire book was to have been devoted to Napoleon under the oriental guise of "Timur," but the "Buch des Timur," as it stands, contains only a couple of poems. The Suleika of the *Divan* is, of course, Marianne von Willemer, who herself contributed one or two beautiful songs—notably that beginning, "Ach um deine feuchten Schwingen"—to the collection. The poet himself is Hatem:—

Marianne von Willemer.

"Nur diess Herz, es ist von Dauer,
Schwillt in jugendlichstem Flor;
Unter Schnee und Nebelschauer
Ras't ein Ätna dir hervor.

Du beschämst wie Morgenröthe
Jener Gipfel ernste Wand,
Und noch einmal fühlet Hatem
Frühlingshauch und Sommerbrand."[2]

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[1] J. P. Eckermann, *l.c.* (April 2, 1829), 2, 92.
[2] *Werke*, 6, 168.

The lyrics of the *West-östliche Divan* have the convincing sincerity of Goethe's early love-poetry, and are calmer and more reflective than those inspired by Lili or Frau von Stein; less spontaneous, they are all the richer in penetrating ideas, in phrases which contain the very essence of Goethe's thought — two of the books are characteristically entitled "Buch der Sprüche" and "Buch der Betrachtungen." It is to the *Zahme Xenien* and the *Sprüche in Prosa* that we must turn, however, to obtain a true idea of the wealth of apothegmatic wisdom which Goethe poured forth in the last fifteen or twenty years of his life. As a creator of "winged words," he is unsurpassed in the literature of the world.

Wilhelm Meisters Wanderjahre, oder die Entsagenden, of which the first part appeared in 1821, the completed work in the "Ausgabe letzter Hand" in 1829, allows of no comparison, as a piece of fiction, with the *Lehrjahre:* in the *Wanderjahre* the personal fate of the hero ceases to be interesting, and the whole gives the impression of being a collection of brief, irrelevant stories, strung together on a loose thread. Even those characters which are taken over from the *Lehrjahre* are here only shadows of what they were in the earlier book, mere impersonations of ideas. The possibility of his once writing a sequel to *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre* was perhaps present to Goethe's mind when he gave the novel its title; in any case, since 1796, when the matter was discussed with Schiller, he had the intention to follow out Meister's history after his apprenticeship to life was accomplished. He wished, in particular, to mark out the province of the individual in his relations to society, to discuss the duties of man as a member of the social organism,—above all, to show how far a person must subordinate and efface himself in the interests of the race. *Wilhelm Meisters Wanderjahre* consequently contains a more complete summary of Goethe's ideas on social ethics than any other of his works. But the comparatively simple problem which the novelist of the eighteenth century had to face, assumed a much more complicated form when approached by a novelist of the nineteenth. With the rise of industrialism and the progress of machinery, social problems forced the philosophical discussion of individual morality into the background; and Goethe saw that his original plan would not hold all the

Wilhelm Meisters Wanderjahre, 1821-29.

new ideas which crowded upon him—ideas which not only tempted discussion in the novel, but could not be denied admittance to it. Thus although the *Wanderjahre* is full of thoughts which have influenced the whole subsequent development of ethics, it is the most hopelessly fragmentary of all Goethe's books. Some of the component stories, however, such as *Die Flucht nach Ägypten*, with which the novel opens, and *Der Mann von funfzig Jahren*, are told freshly and vividly, but almost all of them belong to a much earlier period than does the rest of the book.

It is not surprising that the last years of the poet who stood at the head of European literature should have been rich in interesting experiences; so full, indeed, is the record, that there is hardly a week in Goethe's later life which cannot be accounted for. Here, however, we can only concern ourselves with the principal incidents. In 1813, Wieland died; in 1816, Goethe lost his wife; in 1817, he resigned his directorship of the theatre, the duties of which had been growing year by year more irksome to him. In 1822, he was once more at the mercy of an irresistible passion, his last love being Ulrike von Levetzow, a girl of nineteen, whom he met at Marienbad in the summer of this year. Notwithstanding his years, his feelings for Ulrike were deep enough to wring from him the beautiful *Marienbader Elegie* and the *Trilogie der Leidenschaft*. Meanwhile, death was rapidly thinning the ranks of his old friends and fellow-workers: in 1827, Charlotte von Stein died; in the following year Duke Karl August, and on the 22nd of March, 1832, Goethe himself was dead. Not in German-speaking lands alone, but throughout Europe, it was felt that the poet's death marked the close of an era—that the grandest intellectual force known in literature for centuries had passed away.

Ulrike von Levetzow.

In the beginning of 1832, Goethe put the finishing touches to *Faust*, the poem which, more than any other, was the work of his life. The second part of *Faust*, although poetically complete in itself and more of an artistic whole than the *Wanderjahre*, is hardly less weighted with a burden of allegory, science, and philosophy; much, as Goethe himself said, was "hineingeheimnisst" into the poem.[1] But at the same time, were it possible to remove all such elements from

Faust, Zweyter Theil, 1833.

[1] Letter to Zelter, July 27, 1829 (*Briefwechsel*, 5, 77).

the Second Part of *Faust*, there would still be left a dramatic poem of imposing beauty. In the First Part, Goethe had led his hero through the little world of personal feelings and aspirations; in the Second, he introduces him to the great macrocosm of human society, places him face to face with questions of social welfare, of government, finance, and war. Nor is this all: following an incident in the saga which had been utilised by Marlowe, he brings Faust into personal relations with the past, with Greek antiquity. Thus, although in its Second Part *Faust* is a "world drama" on a gigantic scale, it remains—as it was a foregone conclusion that it would—a fragment, the fragment of an incommensurable whole. For the theme of *Faust*, as Goethe conceives it, and as it lies hidden in the old fable, is little less than humanity itself.

At the beginning of the Second Part, Faust awakens to a new world and a new life. He comes with Mephistopheles to the Court of the Kaiser. Owing to the ruler's indifference towards his duties, the land is on the brink of ruin, but Mephistopheles prevents bankruptcy by the introduction of paper money, and a great "Mummenschanz" takes place at the Court. For the amusement of the Kaiser, Faust undertakes to conjure up Helena and Paris, but before he is able to do this, he is obliged to visit the mysterious "mothers," beings who would seem to personify the creative intelligence to which we owe what Plato called the ideals of things. Returning endowed with the power of recalling the shadows of the past, Faust fulfils his promise, only himself to fall in love with Helen of Troy. He attempts to grasp her, but the phantom disappears, and he is thrown stunned to the ground. In the second act, Faust is once more discovered in the familiar study of the First Part, intent on creating in a glass retort a homunculus. With the help of this small being, which represents his will,—the factor by which the conceptions of his imagination are realised,—Faust obtains what the "mothers" could only give him in shadowy, unsubstantial form, and the homunculus leads him back through the centuries to the scene of the "Classische Walpurgisnacht." Although one of the most poetically conceived scenes in the entire drama, the poetry of this second Walpurgisnacht is marred by an excess of obscure symbolism: beneath the picturesque beauty of the scenes in the "Pharsalian Fields,"

on the banks of the Peneios, and the shore of the Ægean Sea, is concealed a scientific allegory of the origin of the universe.

Helena, 1827.

Act III., which was published separately, in 1827, as *Helena: Klassisch-romantische Phantasmagorie*, is the oldest and best-sustained part of the Second *Faust;* the harmony of the scene is not disturbed to the same extent as in other parts of the poem, by the intrusion of an irrelevant allegory. The subject of *Helena* is Faust's marriage with Helen of Troy, who has taken refuge with him from the wrath of Menelaus. In bringing Helena from her Grecian home to Faust's medieval "Burg," Goethe has not only placed in striking contrast the two ruling ideas of his time expressed by the catchwords "classic" and "romantic," but has also given picturesque expression to what had been the chief striving of his own intellectual life, the reconciliation of Greek ideals with those of Northern art and poetry. From the union of Faust and Helen springs Euphorion, a being in whom Goethe has symbolised Byron. Higher and higher Euphorion soars until, in an overbold flight, he falls, another Icarus, lifeless at his parents' feet. Helena herself vanishes, leaving only her robe and veil behind her, while Faust, as if awakened from a dream, is led back by Mephistopheles into practical life. The fourth act of the Second Part is the weakest of the five: here Goethe obviously intended to dwell on the ideal side of politics, as in the first act he had described its rottenness. Faust aids his Kaiser to vanquish an opponent in battle, and then devotes himself to the development of industry and commerce; he plans colonies, lays out canals, and even wins from the sea a wide expanse of new land.

At the opening of the fifth act, Faust's life-work is finished; from the battlements of his palace he looks down upon the results of his labours. Although he has reached his hundredth year, he is still unsatisfied; the moment has not arrived to which he can say—

"Verweile doch! Du bist so schön!"

It troubles him, for instance, that all he looks on does not belong to him, and to attain his end, he causes the cottage of two old peasants to be burnt to the ground. But his life lies in the hands of a higher power. Four grey figures, Want, Guilt, Care, Need, approach, but only Care is able to pene-

trate into Faust's palace, and in the distance appears her stronger brother Death. "Hast du," she asks, "die Sorge nie gekannt?" To which Faust replies in words that express Goethe's own creed:—

"Ich bin nur durch die Welt gerannt;
Ein jed' Gelüst ergriff ich bei den Haaren,
Was nicht genügte liess ich fahren,
Was mir entwischte liess ich ziehn.
Ich habe nur begehrt und nur vollbracht,
Und abermals gewünscht und so mit Macht
Mein Leben durchgestürmt; erst gross und mächtig;
Nun aber geht es weise, geht bedächtig.
Der Erdenkreis ist mir genug bekannt,
Nach drüben ist die Aussicht uns verrannt;
Thor! wer dorthin die Augen blinzelnd richtet,
Sich über Wolken seines gleichen dichtet!
Er stehe fest und sehe hier sich um;
Dem Tüchtigen ist diese Welt nicht stumm;
Was braucht er in die Ewigkeit zu schweifen!
Was er erkennt lässt sich ergreifen;
Er wandle so den Erdentag entlang;
Wenn Geister spuken geh' er seinen Gang,
Im Weiterschreiten find' er Qual und Glück,
Er! unbefriedigt jeden Augenblick."[1]

Care breathes on Faust's eyes and blinds him. At Mephistopheles' bidding, lemures dig his grave, and on the brink of this grave Faust grasps at last the great truth, the end of all practical wisdom:—

"Ja! diesem Sinne bin ich ganz ergeben,
Das ist der Weisheit letzter Schluss:
Nur der verdient sich Freiheit wie das Leben,
Der täglich sie erobern muss.
Und so verbringt, umrungen von Gefahr,
Hier Kindheit, Mann und Greis sein tüchtig Jahr.
Solch ein Gewimmel möcht' ich sehn,
Auf freiem Grund mit freiem Volke stehn.
Zum Augenblicke dürft' ich sagen:
Verweile doch, du bist so schön!
Es kann die Spur von meinen Erdetagen
Nicht in Äonen untergehn.—
Im Vorgefühl von solchem hohen Glück
Geniess' ich jetzt den höchsten Augenblick."[2]

Thus Faust sinks into the grave in the "Vorgefühl" of perfect satisfaction, but Mephistopheles, believing that with Care's aid he has won his wager[3] and that the hour of his triumph has

[1] Act 5, ll. 11,433 ff. (*Werke*, 15, 309). [2] *Ibid.*, ll. 11,573 ff. (p. 315 f.)
[3] Cp., however, H. Türck, *Eine neue Faust-Erklärung*, 2nd ed., Berlin, 1901, 55 ff.

come, summons his demons to carry Faust off. The angels of the heavenly host descend to do battle for Faust's soul, and Mephistopheles shrinks before the roses that they strew. Higher and higher they rise, bearing the immortal part of Faust, and singing as they go :—

"Gerettet ist das edle Glied
Der Geisterwelt vom Bösen :
Wer immer strebend sich bemüht
Den können wir erlösen."[1]

They ascend through the whole hierarchy of medieval Christianity, to the feet of the Mater Gloriosa herself. Here, "Una poenitentium, sonst Gretchen genannt," intercedes before the Virgin for the "früh Geliebten, nicht mehr Getrübten," and the drama closes with the hymn of the "Chorus mysticus" : —

"Alles Vergängliche
Ist nur ein Gleichniss ;
Das Unzulängliche
Hier wird's Ereigniss ;
Das Unbeschreibliche
Hier ist's gethan ;
Das Ewig-Weibliche
Zieht uns hinan."[2]

So culminates Goethe's representative work, a work which, in conception, at least, extends over sixty years of the poet's life. It is difficult to believe that the Goethe who gave the nineteenth century its greatest poem, whose later years belonged to the age of exact science, invention, and industrialism, began his intellectual career in the narrow, provincial atmosphere of Gottsched's Leipzig. Never was there a life so rich as his. Not only did he lead German literature through the stormy days of "Sturm und Drang" to the calm age of classical perfection ; not only does he form the end and goal of the movement of eighteenth-century thought, which had begun in England, and become Europeanised in France ; but he was able to understand, as no other man of his generation, the new time. He was the spiritual leader of the Romantic movement, and he encouraged all that was modern and healthy in the literatures of Europe, which sprang up under the influence of Romanticism. He looked on life, it is true, with the

[1] Act 5, ll. 11,934 ff. (p. 330).
[2] *Ibid.*, ll. 12,104 ff. (p. 337).

eyes of eighteenth-century humanitarianism, but, at the same time, he showed an understanding for modern conflicts, for modern ethics, for modern ideals in art and literature, which made him, in the fullest sense, a poet of the nineteenth century. That Goethe was the most universally gifted of men of letters has long been recognised; but it is sometimes forgotten that he was also the representative poet of two centuries, of two widely different epochs of history.

CHAPTER IV.

THE HEIDELBERG ROMANTICISTS.

In following Goethe's life to its close, we have been carried far beyond the point arrived at in the second chapter of the present part. It is now necessary to return once more to the beginning of the century and to trace the development of the movement which was inaugurated by the Romantic School. We have already seen how the ideas scattered abroad by the early Romanticists brought about a change in the aspect of German literature, and how these ideas found support, rather than opposition, in the jubilant individualism of the rising against Napoleon. But between the publication of the *Athenæum* and the battle of Leipzig, there were many stages of literary evolution, and with the second of these is associated the so-called Heidelberg School. The chief members of this group were Clemens Maria Brentano (1778-1842), Ludwig Achim von Arnim (1781-1831), and Joseph von Görres (1776-1848). In the hands of these writers, the vague, poetic idealism of the older school received form and clear outlines: instead of losing itself in purple shadows and yearning for impossible "blue flowers," Romanticism now sought the themes for its poetry in the nation's actual past, and expressed its lyrical ideas in the rhythm of the Volkslied. In other words, in Heidelberg, Romantic individualism became national.

The Heidelberg School.

Brentano's biography[1] resembles in many respects a Romantic novel. His father was of Italian birth, but had settled in Frankfort, where he married a daughter of Sophie von Laroche.

C. M. Brentano, 1778-1842.

[1] *Gesammelte Schriften*, edited by C. Brentano, 9 vols., Stuttgart, 1852-55; selections edited by M. Koch in *Arnim, Klemens und Bettina Brentano* (D.N.L., 146, 1 and 2 [1891]), and by J. Dohmke, Leipzig [1893]. Cp. R. Steig, *Achim von Arnim und Clemens Brentano*, Stuttgart, 1894.

Young Brentano was born at Ehrenbreitstein in 1778. Nothing could have been more distasteful to him than the commercial career for which he was intended, and in 1797, after his father's death, he went to study at the University of Jena. Here he stood in personal relations with the members of the Romantic School, and became intoxicated with their ideas and their poetry. For the next few years he led a wild, unsettled life, wandering like a medieval Spielmann from place to place, with a guitar slung over his back. In 1800, he wrote his first book, *Gustav Wasa*,[1] a satire—in which Tieck's influence predominates — on Kotzebue and other fashionable writers of the day. In the following year he published a novel in two volumes, *Godwi, oder das steinerne Bild der Mutter: ein verwilderter Roman von Maria*.[2] *Godwi*, 1801. Although Brentano's brother regarded this romance as too extravagant to include in the *Gesammelte Schriften*, it forms, nevertheless, an important link between the old Romanticism and the new. *Godwi* begins as an unmistakable imitation of *William Lovell*, but in the second volume the author would seem to have taken *Lucinde* as his model. "Verwildert" *Godwi* certainly is, in plot as in ideas, but it is the representative work of Brentano's youth, and contains the germs of all his subsequent work: with all its faults, *Godwi* is, at least, a better novel than *Lucinde*, whose freedom and unrestraint had attracted Brentano in Jena. Embedded in *Godwi* are a few songs which, subsequently, passed over into *Des Knaben Wunderhorn;* here, too, is the poem, *Die lustigen Musikanten*, which, in 1803, was expanded into a "Singspiel." *Die Lore Lay*, the ballad of the Rhine siren, remodelled by Heine in his familiar Volkslied, is also to be found in *Godwi*, as well as several verses of the fine *Erndtelied*, suggested to Brentano by a Latin hymn:—

"Es ist ein Schnitter, der heisst Tod,
Er mäht das Korn, wenn's Gott gebot
Schon wetzt er die Sense,
Dass schneidend sie glänze;
Bald wird er dich schneiden,
Du musst es nur leiden;
Musst in den Erndtekranz hinein.
Hüte dich, schönes Blümelein!"[3]

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[1] Ed. J. Minor, *Litteraturdenkmale*, 15, Heilbronn, 1883.
[2] Cp. A. Kerr, *Godwi*, Berlin, 1898.
[3] *Werke*, 1, 519.

Sophie Brentano, 1770-1806.

In 1803, Brentano married Sophie Schubart (1770-1806), who was also engaged in literary work: as the wife of Mereau, a librarian in Jena, she had been one of the contributors to Schiller's *Musenalmanache*. Her first marriage proved an unhappy one, and, after a few years, was annulled. In 1800, and again in 1802, she published *Gedichte*,[1] and these were followed by a novel and several volumes of translations. About the time of his marriage, Brentano wrote the most delicately beautiful of all his prose works, *Aus der Chronika eines fahrenden Schülers* (not published until 1818), which, however, remained a fragment. In this faithful imitation of an old chronicle there is a truer medieval spirit than in the novels of either Tieck or Novalis, to whom the middle ages were, after all, only a poetic fairyland. In 1804, the Brentanos settled in Heidelberg, where, during the following year, they were joined by Achim von Arnim.

Aus der Chronika eines fahrenden Schülers, 1818.

L. A. von Arnim, 1781-1831.

Ludwig Achim von Arnim[2] was a calmer, more self-possessed man than his friend; his temperament was serious and characteristically northern, while Brentano had the lightness of the south in his blood. Brentano's favourite form of expression was the lyric, while Arnim, on the other hand, found the epic breadth of prose fiction more congenial to him. Arnim came of a good Brandenburg family, and was born at Berlin, in 1781. He studied in Göttingen and Halle, mainly natural science, and his first publications were on scientific subjects. In 1800, with the aid of Novalis and the physicist Ritter, Arnim came into touch with the group of writers in Jena; shortly afterwards he made the acquaintance of Brentano and of the latter's Frankfort friends, who would seem definitely to have turned his attention from science to literature. The next few years Arnim spent in travel; he visited England and Scotland, and, in short stories and sketches, revealed to his countrymen the romantic side of Scottish life and scenery long before the *Waverley Novels* were written. His first ambitious novel, *Hollins Liebeleben*,[3] in which the influence of *Werther*, *Lovell*, and *Godwi* may be traced, appeared in 1802, and was subsequently incorporated in *Gräfin Dolores*. The fantastic frag-

Early novels.

[1] Cp. M. Mendheim, *Lyrik der klassischen Periode*, 2 (D.N.L., 135, 2), 172 ff.

[2] *Sämmtliche Werke*, 22 vols., Berlin, 1853-56; selections edited by M. Koch in D.N.L., 146, and by J. Dohmke, Leipzig [1893]. Cp. also R. Steig, *l.c.*

[3] Ed. J. Minor, Freiburg, 1883.

ment, *Ariels Offenbarung*, followed in 1805, in which year Arnim made Heidelberg his home.

Heidelberg as a centre of Romanticism.

Once before in the history of German literature, it will be remembered, an important movement had originated in Heidelberg; and the young Romanticists who, in 1805 and 1806, assembled there recalled with pride[1] that, nearly two hundred years previously, Martin Opitz had made Heidelberg a centre for the German Renaissance. Throughout the eighteenth century, the University of Heidelberg had not taken as large a share in the intellectual life of the nation as that of Leipzig, Königsberg, Halle, Göttingen, or Jena. Suddenly, however, at the beginning of the nineteenth century, a few years before the founding of Berlin University, that of Heidelberg burst into activity; G. F. Creuzer (1771-1858), a classical scholar, who was in intimate sympathy with Romantic ideas, was invited to occupy a chair in Heidelberg; he in turn was followed by the jurist A. F. J. Thibaut (1772-1840), and, as representatives of classical philology, by the poet Voss and P. A. Böckh (1785-1867). Efforts were also made to obtain Schelling, Savigny, and Tieck, but without success. Thus, for a few years, from 1805 on, Heidelberg was both in literature and scholarship a centre for the Romantic Movement. The event which gave the school its characteristic stamp was the publication, in the summer of 1805, of the first volume of *Des Knaben Wunderhorn*,[2] to which, in 1808, two other volumes were added.

Des Knaben Wunderhorn, 1805-8.

The collection of Volkslieder which Arnim and Brentano edited under this strange title—it was the subject of the opening poem—is one of the positive achievements of German Romanticism. What Herder had effected in the cosmopolitan spirit of his century, the two Heidelberg poets carried out upon a national basis. The difference is significant. The *Stimmen der Völker* and the *Wunderhorn* belong to two widely different eras of intellectual development—on the one hand, cosmopolitan humanism, on the other, Romantic nationalism and individualism. Although neither Arnim nor Brentano was a lyric genius of the first order, both had Herder's talent for reproducing the style of the Volkslied with absolute faithfulness.

[1] See, for instance, Brentano's *Lied von eines Studenten Ankunft in Heidelberg und seinem Traum auf der Brücke* (*Werke*, 2, 3 ff.)

[2] Ed. A. Birlinger and W. Crecelius, 2 vols., Wiesbaden, 1872-76; also in Reclam's *Universal-Bibliothek*, 1251-56, Leipzig, 1880.

The editors of the *Wunderhorn* were criticised—among others, by Voss, who, it will be remembered, did not stand on the best terms with the younger Heidelberg poets — for having unduly tampered with the original Volkslieder: what, however, they aimed at producing was not a philological text, but a song-book for the people. And they undoubtedly succeeded. *Des Knaben Wunderhorn* became an accepted standard for the German Volkslied, and awakened an interest in the national past more effectually than did A. W. Schlegel's lectures, or the fantastic romances in which Schlegel's friends embodied their conceptions of the middle ages. In other words, the *Wunderhorn* is the key to the whole later "Romantik." The popularity of the book was immediate and widespread; Goethe, to whom the first volume was dedicated, welcomed it in hearty words, while lyric poetry from Eichendorff to Martin Greif, and music from Schubert to the present day, are deep in its debt.[1]

J. J. von Görres, 1776-1848.

In 1807, induced by the success of the *Wunderhorn*, Johann Joseph von Görres[2] collected and edited *Die teutschen Volksbücher*. Although it is usual to associate Görres more with politics than with literature, his importance as a member of the Heidelberg group cannot be overlooked. Whether in politics, journalism, or literature, what he had to say was always suggestive; he was one of those thinkers to whom an intellectual movement owes its ideas. Görres began life as a partisan of the French Revolution, but Paris, which he visited in 1799, disappointed him bitterly. Between this date and about 1813 lay the most productive years of his life, and from 1806 to 1808 he lived in Heidelberg, when his lectures drew large audiences. Besides the *Teutschen Volksbücher*, he edited *Lohengrin* (1813) and *Altdeutsche Volks- und Meisterlieder* (1817), and translated *Das Heldenbuch von Iran* (1820). In 1813, he threw himself into the national movement with all the enthusiasm of his fervid temperament, and, as long as he controlled it (1814-16), the *Rheinische Merkur* was the most influential political journal of its time. Subsequently, his leanings to mysticism and ultramontanism became more pronounced, and his earlier activity was forgotten. From 1836 on, he lived in Munich, where he died in 1848.

[1] Cp. M. Koch in D.N.L., 146, 1, 1, lxix.

[2] *Gesammelte Schriften*, ed. M. Görres, 6 vols., Munich, 1854-60. Cp. J. N. Sepp, *Görres* (*Geisteshelden*, 23), Berlin, 1896, and M. Koch, D.N.L., 146, 1, 1, 1 ff.

Just as the organ of the Romantic School had been the *Athenæum*, that of the Heidelberg circle was the *Zeitung für Einsiedler* (1808), a journal inspired by the spirit that is to be found in the *Wunderhorn* and Görres' *Volksbücher*. Short-lived as was the *Zeitung für Einsiedler*—the title was afterwards changed to *Tröst Einsamkeit*[1]—it bore witness to the many friends and widespread sympathy which the movement had won throughout Germany. Among its contributors were Jean Paul on the one hand, and Uhland on the other and here, too, Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm, the founders of German philology, published their first articles.[2] Both born in Hanau, Jacob in 1785, Wilhelm in the following year, the Grimms commenced their studies in Marburg under Savigny, who awakened their interest in the Romantic movement. As far as literature is concerned, their most important works were the *Kinder- und Haus-Märchen* (1812-15), and the *Deutschen Sagen* (1816-18). While these collections by the brothers Grimm are examples of the same understanding for the untutored popular imagination as is to be found in the *Wunderhorn*, they reflect even more faithfully the naïve heart of the German people. Perhaps for this very reason no Romantic book is, at the present day, more living than Grimms' *Fairy Tales;* and not in Germany alone, but to all peoples, these *Märchen* have become the acknowledged type of the fairy-tale of the people, as opposed to the fairy-tale that is written with a conscious object—be it didactic or satiric.

Zeitung für Einsiedler, 1808.

Jacob Grimm, 1785-1863. Wilhelm Grimm, 1786-1859.

In place of the fantastic and subjective interpretation of the German past, which even the first Romantic School had favoured, the Grimms insisted upon scientific methods of investigation, which, above all things, placed facts before theories. In this way they laid the foundation of the modern study of Germanic antiquity, and through their pupils and fellow-workers — prominent among whom was Karl Lachmann (1793-1851) — exerted a wide influence upon linguistic and literary research. The brothers Grimm stand at the beginning of a new era of academic scholarship, in which the cold, impersonal ideals of the preceding century gave place to the interpretative criticism of Romanticism:

[1] Edited by F. Pfaff, Freiburg, 1883.

[2] Cp. W. Scherer, *Jacob Grimm*, 2nd ed., Berlin, 1885, and C. Franke, *Die Brüder Grimm*, Dresden, 1899.

from their time onwards, philological study was inspired by Romantic ideals.

Both brothers—they were as inseparable in their life as in their work—were librarians, first in Kassel, then, from 1829 on, in Göttingen. In 1841, they settled in Berlin, where, as members of the Academy of Sciences, they gave lectures at the University. Wilhelm died in 1859, Jacob in 1863. Of Jacob Grimm's works, the three most noteworthy are the *Deutsche Grammatik* (of which the first volume appeared in 1819, the fourth in 1837), *Deutsche Rechtsalterthümer* (1828), and *Deutsche Mythologie* (1835), works which were, and still are, an indispensable basis for the study of German antiquity. Later in life, both brothers made a beginning to the great *Deutsche Wörterbuch* (1852 ff.), which has not yet reached its conclusion. Wilhelm Grimm's independent work is less voluminous than his brother's; his chief contribution to German scholarship was *Die deutsche Heldensage* (1829), but he also edited a number of older German texts.

By 1808, the little Heidelberg circle of poets and scholars who had originated so fruitful a movement had, to a great extent, broken up. A certain tie was, it is true, still afforded by the *Heidelberger Jahrbücher* (founded in 1808), but even this did not last long, and Heidelberg soon relapsed into its former unimportance. But in Berlin, where they both settled in 1809, Arnim and Brentano resumed their comradeship, and here they were joined by Eichendorff—whose acquaintance they had made in Heidelberg,—Fouqué, and Chamisso. These writers brought into what might be called the second stage of the younger Romantic movement, a more catholic and productive literary spirit. Before, however, discussing the new members of the group, we must turn to the later writings of Arnim and Brentano, for neither of these poets published his most characteristic work—the *Wunderhorn* excepted—while in Heidelberg.

Arnim's later work.

Arnim left a considerable number of dramatic works, but he possessed even less real dramatic talent than his brother Romanticists; his plays are lacking in dramatic qualities and not adapted for the stage. He had, however, an inexhaustible wealth of imagination, the true Romantic fantasy; and dramas, such as *Halle und Jerusalem* (1811)—which contains a version of Gryphius's *Cardenio und Celinde*—and *Die*

Päpstin Johanna (1813), are characteristically Romantic in style and spirit. Arnim was only really eminent as a novelist; and while Brentano was superior to him as lyric poet and dramatist, in prose fiction he carved out for himself a path on which few were, at that time, able to follow him. There is much of indifferent value in the "Novellen" which form the bulk of his *Schriften*, but, however weak a story may be, Arnim has always the art of picturesque narrative. *Armuth, Reichthum, Schuld und Busse der Gräfin Dolores* (1809), one of the most interesting of his longer books, is the study of a woman who exerts her powers of coquetry to win herself a husband: she is subsequently faithless to him, then repents and lives happily for many years, until, on the anniversary of her fault, a sudden death overtakes her. The denouement recalls the "Schicksalsdrama," and the story, as a whole, is drawn out to a wearisome length by irrelevant and fantastic episodes.

Gräfin Dolores, 1809.

Arnim's chief work, and one of the masterpieces of German Romantic literature, is the historical novel, *Die Kronenwächter*, of which two books were published in 1817, under the title, *Bertholds erstes und zweites Leben*, while a third book was printed from the MS. after Arnim's death. It is in many respects unfortunate that *Die Kronenwächter* should have remained a fragment; for no historical Romantic novel of its time was conceived and planned on so imposing a scale. As a background, Arnim chose the age of the Reformation; Maximilian I., Luther, and Dr Faust are personages of the novel. The "Crown Guardians" is a mysterious society which watches over the Hohenstaufen dynasty, and seeks out and educates descendants of Barbarossa, in the hope that they may one day revive the glories of the German Empire. One of these descendants, Berthold, is brought up in the little Hohenstaufen town of Waiblingen; playing as a child in the ruins of Barbarossa's castle, a mysterious guide shows him its wonders, and a presentiment of his mission dawns on him.

Die Kronenwächter, 1817.

"Eine Reihe ritterlicher Steinbilder," he tells the old watchman, Martin, "steht noch fest und würdig zwischen ausgebrannten Fenstern am Hauptgebäude, ich sahe auch das Seitengebäude, ich sahe im Hintergrunde einen seltsamen, dicht verwachsenen Garten und allerlei künstliche Malerei an der Mauer, die ihn umgiebt—das ist Barbarossas Palast." "So seltsam rufen sie die Ihren,"

sagte Martin in sich, "so viel Tausende haben als Kinder unter diesen Mauern gespielt, und Keinem fiel dies Gebäude auf, Keiner dachte des Barbarossa." "Es ist mein," rief der Knabe, "ich will es ausbauen und will den Garten reinigen, ich weiss schon, wo die Mutter wohnen soll. Komm mit, Vater, sieh es an! Du wirst sie alle wieder kennen in den Steinbildern, unsre alten Herzoge und Kaiser, von denen du mir so viel erzählt hast."[1]

When he grows up, Berthold visits Augsburg and is brought into personal relations with Maximilian's court, of which Arnim gives a picturesque description; but from here on, the story begins to suffer under the author's love of the fantastic and the supernatural, and loses much of its interest for the modern reader. Arnim had his full share of the characteristic Romantic failings; he took over from his predecessors much of that vagueness, that lack of bold, clear outline, which, more than anything else, explains why the Romantic literature had so little hold on the popular mind. Of his other stories, the most characteristic are *Isabella von Ägypten* (1812), *Der tolle Invalide auf dem Fort Ratonneau* (1818), and *Fürst Ganzgott und Sänger Halbgott* (published in 1835). In 1811, Arnim married Clemens Brentano's sister, Bettina—the Bettina who had sat at Goethe's feet, and who, as will be seen in a subsequent chapter, became the most famous woman-writer of her time. But that was not until after her husband's death in 1831.

Brentano's genius is seen to most advantage in his *Märchen* and short stories, in the collection of poems which forms *Die Erfindung des Rosenkranzes*, and in the Romantic drama, *Die Gründung Prags*. At the present day, however, he is remembered chiefly as a story-teller, and none of his works is so popular as the powerful village tragedy, *Die Geschichte vom braven Kasperl und dem schönen Annerl* (1817), and the fairy tale, *Gockel, Hinkel und Gackeleia* (1838). The latter, unquestionably the finest of Brentano's *Märchen*, is told with a quiet ironic humour, although marred, like most invented, or partly invented, fairy-tales, by over-elaboration. *Die Erfindung des Rosenkranzes* and *Die Gründung Prags*, each of which occupies an entire volume in Brentano's collected writings, testify to the extraordinary mastery he possessed over the technicalities of verse and rhyme. *Die Erfindung des Rosenkranzes* (begun in 1803, published in 1852), based

Short stories.

Die Erfindung des Rosenkranzes, 1852.

[1] M. Koch's edition (D.N.L., 146, 1, 2), 28.

on religious legends, amongst others that of *Tannhäuser*, is an allegory, in which the poet has introduced episodes from his own life and the lives of his friends: it is full of fine poetry and delicate "Stimmungsbilder," but its symbolism, and the monotony that is unavoidable in a long poem of this nature, have stood in the way of its success. *Die Gründung Prags* (1815), on the other hand, is the most striking example of those half-epic, half-lyric dramas which had been introduced into German literature by Tieck. Brentano's play is based on a popular saga which Grillparzer, a generation later, made the subject of one of his noblest tragedies. Libussa, daughter of Duke Krokus, is, after her father's death, appointed regent of Bohemia; she chooses as her husband, Primislaus, a peasant, whom her messenger, according to an essential element in the saga, finds behind his plough, and with him she founds the "Golden City" of Prague. A comparison with Grillparzer is, of course, out of the question; for, although Brentano could occasionally write dramatic verse, he had as little of the true dramatic faculty as either Arnim or Tieck. But in the handling of the verse there is a firmness which makes even Tieck's poetry seem a trivial playing with strange metres, and there is also a restraint in the treatment of the theme which is uncommon in Romantic literature. *Die Gründung Prags* met with comparatively little favour in its day, and is now seldom read, but it is, none the less, one of the most imposing creations of the Heidelberg School.

Die Gründung Prags, 1815.

Brentano's subsequent life was unsettled. In 1816, he fell passionately in love with Luise Hensel (1798-1876),[1] herself a religious poetess of unusual gifts, and this love-affair was followed by a strange devotion to the visionary nun, Anna Katharina Emmerich, whose revelations he recorded (*Das bittere Leiden unsers Herrn Jesu Christi*, 1833). Brentano felt himself more and more attracted by the Catholic Church, in which he had been born and educated, and the older he grew, the larger was the share which religion and meditation had in his life and work. He died at Aschaffenburg in 1842.

[1] L. Hensel's *Lieder*, 7th ed., Paderborn, 1892. Cp. F. Binder, *L. Hensel, ein Lebensbild*, Freiburg, 1885.

CHAPTER V.

ROMANTICISM IN BERLIN. THE PHILOSOPHIC MOVEMENT.

Romanticism in Berlin.

THE part which the city of Berlin played in the history of Romanticism was a remarkable one. In this, the last stronghold of Rationalism, was founded the first Romantic School, and with the lectures, *Über schöne Litteratur und Kunst*, which A. W. Schlegel delivered in the winter of 1801-2, the movement inaugurated by the school may be said to have taken root. But the city of Voltaire and Frederick the Great, of Ramler and Nicolai, changed slowly, and, even at the present day, in spite of the cosmopolitan character due to its increased political responsibilities, Berlin is still pre-eminently the city of Rationalism. The forces at work in the capital were thus diametrically opposed to Romanticism, and yet, throughout the whole history of the movement, Berlin would seem to have had a fascination for the younger writers like that of the candle for the moth. Not only the Schlegels and Novalis of the older generation—Tieck was, of course, a native of Berlin—but also one after another of the South German Romanticists, who have just been discussed, found their way to the Prussian capital. The secret of this irresistible attraction is that, at that time, Berlin possessed, in a higher degree than any other German town, an intellectual society and a concentrated literary life. Tieck's ambitions, it will be remembered, had been kindled by his admission to the circle at the head of which stood the composer and *littérateur* J. F. Reichardt (1752-1814); and to this circle —which was the first to look upon the new movement with favour—also belonged K. F. Zelter (1758-1832), Goethe's intimate friend. The most important centres of Romanticism in Berlin were, however, the brilliant Jewish salons presided

over by women of genius, such as Henriette Herz (1764-1847) and Rahel Levin (1771-1833),[1] who subsequently married K. A. Varnhagen von Ense (1785-1858). It was Henriette Herz who brought Schleiermacher and Friedrich Schlegel together, and in her house the latter made the acquaintance of Dorothea Veit, who afterwards became his wife. These salons, which found a common bond in their unequivocal worship of Goethe, were the focuses of North German literature at the beginning of the century.

In 1809, as we have seen, both Arnim and Brentano exchanged Heidelberg for Berlin. As popular writers, both were surpassed in the eyes of their contemporaries by another member of their group, Friedrich de la Motte Fouqué, a *protégé* of A. W. Schlegel.[2] Born in Brandenburg, in 1777, of a military family, Fouqué began to write in 1801, and from this date onwards published his romances in rapid succession. Chivalry, on the one hand, and the Scandinavian sagas on the other, were the two poles round which his work turned; in other words, his novels are the direct successors of the "Ritterromane" which were so widely read at the close of the "Sturm und Drang." Of his romances of chivalry, the best is *Der Zauberring* (1813), which contained enough of the spirit of Fouqué's own time to appeal to the younger generation, then fighting for freedom from the Napoleonic yoke. The theme of *Die Fahrten Thiodolfs des Isländers* (1815) is taken from northern mythology, and a northern saga is also the basis of the romance of *Sintram und seine Gefährten* (1814). The most pleasing and unaffected of all Fouqué's works, and the only one that is still popular, is *Undine* (1811), the story of a water-sprite without a soul. Undine can, however, obtain a soul by marriage with a mortal, and a knight, Huldebrand von Ringstetten, loves her and marries her. Her uncle, Kühleborn, is determined to lure her back to her native element, and, with his aid, a certain Berthalda estranges Huldebrand's love from his unearthly wife. Undine returns to her kinsfolk, but, on the day that Huldebrand marries Berthalda, she returns and kills him with a kiss. Although Fouqué's style is not free

F. de la Motte Fouqué, 1777-1843.

Der Zauberring, 1813.

Undine, 1811.

[1] Cp. O. Berdrow, *Rahel Varnhagen*, Berlin, 1900. Her husband's *Ausgewählte Schriften* are collected in 13 vols., Leipzig, 1871-76.

[2] *Ausgewählte Werke*, 12 vols., Halle, 1841; a selection, edited by M. Koch, in D.N.L., 146, 2, 1 [1893].

from mannerisms, he is able to endow miraculous occurrences with a peculiar naïve charm, which at once wins the reader's sympathy. Unfortunately, however, in almost all his work there is an excess of the supernatural, to which he turns for a solution of every psychological difficulty: his ability to make character the source of motive and action was hardly superior to that of his predecessors in the "Sturm und Drang." Besides novels, Fouqué also left a number of stirring songs and a few dramas on Scandinavian themes, similar to those for which Oehlenschläger, the leading Danish Romanticist, had also tried to gain a hearing in Germany. The most interesting of these dramas, if only as a forerunner of plays on the same subject by Hebbel and Wagner, is the "Heldenspiel" of *Sigurd der Schlangentödter* (1808). From 1820 onwards —he died in 1843—Fouqué's writings deteriorate rapidly: great as his reputation had once been, he outlived it by more than twenty years.

Adelbert von Chamisso, 1781-1838.

The most gifted lyric genius among the Berlin Romanticists was a young French nobleman, Louis Charles Adelaïde de Chamisso, who was born in Champagne in 1781, and is known to German literature as Adelbert von Chamisso.[1] When the poet was a boy of eight, his family had to flee from the terrors of the Revolution: they settled in Berlin, where Chamisso became one of the queen's pages, and was educated for the Prussian military service. For a time he hesitated between French and German as a medium of expression, but an introduction to Varnhagen von Ense and his friends turned the balance in favour of German. Chamisso's first poems appeared in the *Musenalmanach* (1804-6)—the so-called "Grüne Almanach"[2]—which was edited by himself and Varnhagen von Ense, and played a part in the movement similar to that of the *Zeitung für Einsiedler* in Heidelberg.

Although Chamisso had thus written poetry as early as 1804, he did not turn seriously to literature until more than twenty years later. In the interval, he served in the field, went to France in hope of a professorship, spent several months with Madame de Staël at Coppet on Lake

[1] Editions of Chamisso's works by M. Koch, 4 vols., Stuttgart, 1883, and O. F. Walzel (D.N.L., 148 [1892]).

[2] The *Musenalmanach für das Jahr* 1806 is edited by L. Geiger in the *Berliner Neudrucke*, 2, 1 (1889).

Geneva, and, between 1815 and 1817, made a voyage round the world. On his return, he obtained an appointment as keeper of the Royal Botanical Collections in Berlin, and here he remained until his death in 1838. The first collected edition of his *Gedichte* did not appear until 1831—that is to say, long after Romanticism had passed its zenith. But there are no signs of decay in Chamisso's lyrics; indeed, the Romantic lyric, as a whole, was immune against degeneration. Nor does anything in his poetry betray the French aristocrat; on the contrary, he possessed in a remarkable degree the characteristic "deutsche Gemüt"; he delighted in simple joys and sorrows, and described them with a warmth and sentimentality that was wholly German. His songs of this class, such as the cycles of *Frauen-Liebe und Leben* (1830) and *Lebens-Lieder und Bilder* (1831), have, in spite of occasional prosaic and unmusical verses, become almost Volkslieder. In his narrative poems and ballads, such as *Die Löwenbraut* (1827), *Die Giftmischerin* (1828), *Das Kruzifix* (1830), and *Mateo Falcone, der Corse* (1830), he strikes a more original note, inclining to the bizarre and blood-curdling subjects favoured by the earlier Romanticists. Finest of all is *Salas y Gomez* (1829), a reminiscence of his voyage round the world:—

Chamisso's lyrics.

Ballads.

> "Salas y Gomez raget aus den Fluthen
> Des stillen Meers, ein Felsen kahl und bloss,
> Verbrannt von scheitelrechter Sonne Gluthen,
> Ein Steingestell' ohn' alles Gras und Moos,
> Das sich das Volk der Vögel auserkohr,
> Zur Ruhstatt im bewegten Meereschooss."[1]

But even when the themes of his ballads are sensational, Chamisso can ill conceal his gentle, sentimental nature; the strong dramatic tones of Schiller, or even Uhland, were denied to him. As a purely lyric poet, he is most of an innovator in the translations of Béranger, which he and his friend, F. von Gaudy, made in 1838: these, as well as his own imitations of Béranger's political lyric, justify us in mentioning him with Uhland as a forerunner of the political poets of 1830 and 1848. As a prose-writer, Chamisso is the author of one of the most popular tales of the nineteenth century, *Peter Schlemihls wundersame Geschichte* (1814). The naïve

Peter Schlemihl, 1814.

[1] O. F. Walzel's edition, 386.

credulity and simplicity which characterised Chamisso's poetry made him an admirable story-teller, especially when, as in this story of a man who sells his shadow to the devil, the incredible has, by means of minute, realistic touches, to be made credible. Peter Schlemihl receives an inexhaustible purse in exchange for his shadow, but the want of the latter brings him into so many difficulties that he soon rues his bargain. The old grey gentleman from whom he obtained the purse appears again, and offers to restore his shadow to him in exchange for his soul. Schlemihl, however, will have nothing more to do with him, throws away the purse, and, with a pair of seven-league boots, wanders through the world. In this way he finds again the peace of mind he had lost.

J. von Eichendorff, 1788-1857.

Born in Upper Silesia in 1788, Joseph Freiherr von Eichendorff[1] had become acquainted with Arnim and his friends when a student in Heidelberg; he had contributed to the *Wunderhorn* and assisted Görres with his *Volksbücher*. The stimulus Eichendorff received in Heidelberg bore rich fruit in the two years (1808-10) which he spent under his father's roof. During this period the greater part of his novel, *Ahnung und Gegenwart*, was written, as well as many of his finest lyrics: among the latter, the *Zeitlieder* bear witness to the dejection that lay upon Germany during the Napoleonic invasion. In 1810, Eichendorff joined the Austrian service, but in 1813, was back again in the north, fighting in the ranks of Lützow's chasseurs. It was 1816 before he was able to settle down to a quiet life. Entering the government service in Breslau, he rose rapidly, the stages in his advance being marked by Danzig, Königsberg, and Berlin. He retired from the public service in 1844, and died in 1857.

Lyrics.

In Eichendorff's early songs and in the love-poetry (*Frühling und Liebe*), inspired by Luise von Larisch, whom he met in 1810, and married five years later, he is unquestionably the greatest lyric poet of the Romantic Movement. The poetic genius which his *Gedichte* (collected 1837) reveal has not many sides, but, within its limits, it is perfect: in the history of the German lyric, indeed, with the exception of Goethe and Walther von der Vogelweide, there is not another singer who

[1] *Sämmtliche poetische Werke*, 4 vols., 3rd ed., Leipzig, 1883; a selection, edited by R. Dietze, 2 vols., Leipzig, 1891. Cp. M. Koch, *Fouqué und Eichendorff* (D.N.L., 146, 2, 2 [1893]).

has brought the national lyric feeling to more exquisite expression than Eichendorff. He is essentially a poet of nature; the beauty of spring and sunshine, of hill and dale and sky was always present to him; the magic voices of the forest, which had sung round his cradle, accompanied him all through his life. His ideal, like that of all the German singers, from the Spielleute of the middle ages downwards, is a free "Wanderleben," and *Wanderlieder* occupy the place of honour in his collected poems.

"Wem Gott will rechte Gunst erweisen,
Den schickt er in die weite Welt,
Dem will er seine Wunder weisen
In Berg und Wald und Strom und Feld.

Die Trägen, die zu Hause liegen,
Erquicket nicht das Morgenroth,
Sie wissen nur vom Kinderwiegen,
Von Sorgen, Last und Noth um Brot."[1]

Love of home and love of nature—these are the two poles of Eichendorff's genius, the passions with which his lyric poetry is inspired, and nowhere are they more beautifully expressed than in *Abschied*, a poem which originally, however, bore the title *Im Walde der Heimath*:—

"O Thäler weit, o Höhen,
O schöner, grüner Wald,
Du meiner Lust und Wehen
Andächt'ger Aufenthalt!
Da draussen, stets betrogen,
Saus't die geschäft'ge Welt,
Schlag' noch einmal die Bogen
Um mich, du grünes Zelt!

Wenn es beginnt zu tagen,
Die Erde dampft und blinkt,
Die Vögel lustig schlagen
Dass dir dein Herz erklingt:
Da mag vergehn, verwehen
Das trübe Erdenleid,
Da sollst du auferstehen
In junger Herrlichkeit!"[2]

As a love-poet, Eichendorff is not to be compared with Goethe; neither does he possess Goethe's wealth of ideas and reflection; his lyrics are further removed from the simplicity

[1] From *Aus dem Leben eines Taugenichts* (M. Koch's edition, 2, 64).
[2] *Gedichte*, ed. M. Koch, 2, 224 f.

of the Volkslied than either Chamisso's or Wilhelm Müller's, and his range is more limited than Heine's. On the other hand, his exquisite spirituality and his power of attuning human emotions to nature's most varied moods, give him a unique place among German singers.

Eichendorff's other writings

Eichendorff left a varied legacy behind him; besides lyrics and novels, he wrote dramas—*Der letzte Held von Marienburg* (1830), *Ezelin von Romano* (1828)—which have little or no dramatic quality, several narrative poems, such as *Robert und Guiscard* (1855) and *Lucius* (1857), and, in the last years of his life, he was much engaged in criticism and literary history. As a critic, he is always picturesque and suggestive, but in a book like *Über die ethische und religiöse Bedeutung der neuen romantischen Poesie in Deutschland* (1847), he stands at too great a distance from his own youth to understand the movement in which he grew up.

Ahnung und Gegenwart, 1815.

Ahnung und Gegenwart, Eichendorff's first novel, which was finished in 1811, although not published until 1815, is one of those books which exemplify the ambitions rather than the achievements of the Romantic Movement. Like *Franz Sternbald*, it is a novel that describes many wanderings; "Stimmungsbilder" pass before the reader in variegated, unending succession, all dominated by a deep unhappy love, which is at last consumed in its own flames; but there is as little clearness or homogeneity in the plot as in a novel of Jean Paul's, an author by whom Eichendorff would seem to have been influenced, although his chief model was naturally *Wilhelm Meister*. Like so many of the Romantic poets, Eichendorff had abundance of ideas wherewith to fill his vessel, but he had not learned the art of making the vessel itself; and his other long novel, *Dichter und ihre Gesellen*, published in 1834, is even more loosely constructed. As a prose-writer, however, he is the author of one masterpiece, *Aus dem Leben eines Taugenichts* (1826). This wonderful story—the pearl of Romantic fiction—cannot better be described than as a crystallisation in prose of his own *Wanderlieder*. The story itself is trivial, but, in this age, the strength of the novel did not, as we have seen so often, lie in its plot. A young musician sets out on his wanderings with his fiddle on his back, becomes gardener at a castle, falls in love with what he believes to be a countess, is carried off to Italy by some

Aus dem Leben eines Taugenichts, 1826.

artists, who give themselves out as highwaymen. But never, perhaps, did a writer make so much out of so little. Eichendorff poured into this book his poetic aspiration, his dreamy delight in nature, and his yearning for Italy, that goal of all Romantic souls. While spacious, unfinished novels like *Heinrich von Ofterdingen* and *Die Kronenwächter* give some idea of what the Romantic writers aimed at, it is to a gem like *Aus dem Leben eines Taugenichts* that we turn to see what they actually achieved. Eichendorff's other novels, such as *Das Marmorbild*, written in 1817, but first published in the same volume as the *Taugenichts* in 1826, and *Das Schloss Dürande* (1837), a tragic story with the French Revolution as background, although more pleasing than his long novels, cannot compare with the *Taugenichts*. When Eichendorff died in 1857, he was literally, as Heine described him, "der letzte Ritter der Romantik"; but he had outlived the movement, and his own most vital work was done before he had passed middle life.

The least fruitful side of Romanticism was its practical politics. To Friedrich Schlegel, for instance, the whole system of modern government seemed out of joint, and he would have liked to see Germany converted into a medieval state. The new political spirit is clearly exemplified in the work of Friedrich von Gentz (1764-1832) and Adam Müller (1779-1829). The former of these began as an enthusiastic upholder of English principles, his first work (1793) being a translation of Burke's *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, and in the period of Germany's humiliation, Gentz's hatred of Napoleon found hardly less eloquent expression than the patriotism of Fichte or Arndt. In 1802, Gentz entered the service of Austria, and his liberalism gradually disappeared; he became an apologist for and champion of Prince Metternich, whose *régime* was, after all, only a logical consequence of the Romantic ideas as applied to politics. The typical example of a Romantic politician, however, was Adam Müller. A mystic and reactionary thinker, Muller recoiled from the Prussian methods of government, and, like his friend Gentz, ultimately found in Austria the sympathy he could not obtain at home. He stood in a nearer relation than Gentz to the literary circles of the time, and besides assisting Kleist to edit his journal, *Phöbus* (1808), he delivered lectures *Über*

F. von Gentz, 1764-1832.

A. Müller, 1779-1829.

die deutsche Wissenschaft und Litteratur (1806) from a strictly Romantic standpoint.

F. K. von Savigny, 1779-1861.

Although in its practical politics the Romantic spirit thus failed to advance the movement of the new century, it produced in Friedrich Karl von Savigny (1779-1861) the most eminent German jurist. This writer's conception of the nature of laws sprang from the supposition that human society is an organic growth, a theory which, it will be remembered, was one of Herder's legacies to the nineteenth century. Savigny established the principle that a system of laws could not be imposed upon a people from without, but must be evolved from the customs and usages handed down by tradition. This was the kernel of his work. In 1810, he was invited to be Professor of Roman Law in the new University of Berlin, and in 1815, appeared the first volume of his *Geschichte des Römischen Rechts im Mittelalter* (6 vols., 1815-31). To the invigorating influence of Romanticism we owe, too, the epoch-making *Römische Geschichte* (1811-32) of Barthold Georg Niebuhr (1776-1831) and the *Geschichte der Hohenstaufen und ihrer Zeit* (1823-25) of F. L. G. von Raumer (1781-1873).

The philosophic movement.

The three great philosophers at the beginning of the century, Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel, were each, at one period or another of their careers, intimately associated with the literary movement. Fichte, from whom, as we have seen, the school drew its practical ethics, was essentially a pioneer, while Schelling was the philosopher of the Romantic idea, the thinker, whose philosophy harmonised most perfectly with that of the poets and critics. Finally, Hegel, whose thought did not attain its full force until the Romantic Movement was on the wane, was the philosopher of Romantic decay.

G. W. F. Hegel, 1770-1831.

G. W. F. Hegel,[1] born in Stuttgart in 1770, was eight years younger than Fichte, and five years older than Schelling. He, too, graduated from the fountain-head of Romantic philosophy, Jena, where he taught from 1801 to 1806. In 1807, his first notable work was published, *Die Phänomenologie des Geistes*, in which his soaring idealism stood out in sharp contrast to the philosophy of Schelling. His work on *Logik* appeared between 1812 and 1816, the *Philosophie des Rechts*,

[1] *Werke*, 18 vols., 1834-45; vol. 19 (Leipzig, 1887) contains his letters. Cp. R. Haym, *Hegel und seine Zeit*, Berlin, 1857, and K. Fischer, *Hegels Leben, Werke und Lehre*. Heidelberg, 1900-01.

in 1820. In 1816, he received a call to the University of Heidelberg, in 1818, to Berlin, where he died in 1831.

To no other thinker did the nineteenth century owe so many new thoughts as to Hegel; no philosopher left his mark upon his age, or rather upon the age that succeeded him—for Hegelianism first became a dominant power after the Revolution of 1830—more indelibly than he. For the greater part of the nineteenth century, indeed, his system was regarded as the *ne plus ultra* of metaphysical thinking, a triumphant conclusion to the idealistic philosophy inaugurated by Kant. In his method and in his application of the idea of historical evolution, Hegel set out from a Romantic basis; Romantic, too, was his extraordinarily subtle idealism before which the boundaries even of mind and matter disappeared. But, in place of Schelling's "nature," Hegel set "spirit," and the individual, so important a factor in all purely Romantic speculation, was made subordinate to a collective and historical conception of race. In theory, Hegel's philosophy was magnificent; where, for instance, it laid down a basis for the philosophy of history, its influence was enormous and immediate; by one flash of his genius, Hegel called a new science into existence. But in politics, in practical ethics, it stood behind Fichte's glowing individualism; in religious inspiration behind Schleiermacher's spirituality; to art and poetry it brought none of that health and vigour which the nature-philosophy of Schelling was able to communicate, and consequently, as far as literature was concerned, the era of Hegelian ascendancy was a barren one.

Arthur Schopenhauer, 1788-1860.

Hegel's successor in the intellectual evolution of the century was Schopenhauer; under the ægis of Schopenhauer's philosophy, as we shall see in a later chapter, began the philosophic and literary revolt against Hegelianism. But just as Hegel's influence first became a power in the age after he was dead, so Schopenhauer was an old man before he was accepted as a philosopher at all. Arthur Schopenhauer,[1] whose mother, Johanna Schopenhauer (1766-1838), belonged to the literary society of Weimar at the beginning of the century, was born in Danzig in 1788, and died in Frankfort,

1 *Sämmtliche Werke*, ed. E. Grisebach, 6 vols., also *Nachlass*, 4 vols., *Briefe*, 2 vols. (all in Reclam's *Universalbibliothek*), Leipzig, 1891-95. Cp. E. Grisebach, *A. Schopenhauer, Geschichte seines Lebens*, Berlin, 1897, and J. Volkelt, *A. Schopenhauer*, Stuttgart, 1900.

which was his home for more than half his life, in 1860. His chief work, *Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung*, appeared as early as 1819, but he had to wait nearly forty years before his philosophy received the recognition it deserved; indeed, general attention was not drawn to Schopenhauer, until, in 1851, he published a collection of essays under the title *Parerga und Paralipomena.*

Schopenhauer was what no German thinker had been before him, a master of style; he is one of the most eminent prose writers of the first half of the century. In the cast of his mind, he showed many points of similarity with Novalis and Friedrich Schlegel, and his philosophy, too, was an unmistakable product of the "Romantik"; compared with Hegelianism, Schopenhauer's doctrines were virtually a return to the ideas from which the Romantic School set out. The fundamental principle of his philosophy is that the visible world is only "Vorstellung," a figment of the brain, and the only entity, the real world, is the will, that is to say, the active principle which manifests itself in the universe and reaches its highest development in man. But the will is incited to action by a sense of deficiency, in other words, by suffering; and existence resolves itself into a perpetual struggle against pain. Even if we attain the objects we strive after, the consequence is a feeling of satiety, of ennui, which is as undesirable as the suffering that prompted our actions. Thus the only complete solution to the problem of life is the abandonment of the "will to live"; the alternative before us is suffering or non-existence.

"Aber Das," so Schopenhauer closes his *Welt als Wille und Vorstellung*, "was sich gegen dieses Zerfliessen in's Nichts sträubt, unsere Natur, ist ja eben nur der Wille zum Leben, der wir selbst sind, wie er unsere Welt ist. . . . Wenden wir aber den Blick von unserer eigenen Dürftigkeit und Befangenheit auf diejenigen, welche die Welt überwanden, in denen der Wille, zur vollen Selbsterkenntniss gelangt, sich in Allem wiederfand und dann sich selbst frei verneinte, und welche dann nur noch seine letzte Spur, mit dem Leibe, den sie belebt, verschwinden zu sehen abwarten; so zeigt sich uns, statt des rastlosen Dranges und Treibens, statt des steten Überganges von Wunsch zu Furcht und von Freude zu Leid, statt der nie befriedigten und nie ersterbenden Hoffnung, daraus der Lebenstraum des wollenden Menschen besteht, jener Friede, der höher ist als alle Vernunft, jene gänzliche Meeresstille des Gemüths, jene tiefe Ruhe, unerschütterliche

Zuversicht und Heiterkeit, deren blosser Abglanz im Antlitz, wie ihn Rafael und Coreggio dargestellt haben, ein ganzes und sicheres Evangelium ist: nur die Erkenntniss ist geblieben, der Wille ist verschwunden. . . . Diese Betrachtung ist die einzige, welche uns dauernd trösten kann, wann wir einerseits unheilbares Leiden und endlosen Jammer als der Erscheinung des Willens, der Welt, wesentlich erkannt haben, und andererseits, bei aufgehobenem Willen, die Welt zerfliessen sehen und nur das leere Nichts vor uns behalten."[1]

Such is the spirit of Schopenhauer's pessimism; it not only denies the validity of Hegel's conception of society as a historical growth, but also excludes all hope for the development of the race; it is a pessimism which culminates in the negation of the will and the cessation of existence. And yet, negative as this philosophy was, it freed German intellectual life from the meaningless juggling with words, into which Hegelianism ultimately degenerated, and, as we shall see in a subsequent chapter, reawakened literature to earnest aims when once the storms of 1848 were past.

[1] *Werke*, 1, 526.

CHAPTER VI.

THE DECAY OF ROMANTICISM.

The foregoing chapters of the present part have been occupied with Romanticism as a steadily growing force in German literature: we have followed the Romantic literature through the three stages associated with Jena, Heidelberg, and Berlin. It has now to be studied in its period of decay. While the work of Chamisso and Eichendorff, if not of Fouqué, was still virtually free from elements that could be called decadent, the writers who have to be considered in the present chapter represent either the disintegration of the Romantic idea owing to an extravagant abuse of supernatural motives, or else they exemplify how Romanticism, as it ceased to be a vital force, assumed new forms and adapted itself to other ends.

E. T. A. Hoffmann, 1776-1822.

Beyond question the most brilliantly endowed of the later Romanticists was Ernst Theodor Wilhelm Hoffmann[1]—he himself adopted the name Amadäus, instead of Wilhelm, in honour of Mozart. Hoffmann was born in Königsberg on January 24, 1776. As a child he was extraordinarily precocious, and at the age of sixteen he matriculated at the University of Königsberg. Law was his chosen profession, and in 1796, he received an appointment first at Glogau, then in Berlin, and finally, in 1800, in Posen. In Posen, however, his dangerous talent for caricature made him enemies, and, as the consequence of a jest during the carnival, he was sent to Plozk, a small town on the Vistula. Being subsequently allowed to exchange Plozk for Warsaw, he made here the acquaintance of Zacharias Werner, whose nature was in some

[1] The most complete edition of Hoffmann's works is that edited by E. Grisebach, 15 vols., Leipzig, 1900. Cp. G. Ellinger, *E. T. A. Hoffmann, sein Leben und seine Werke*, Hamburg, 1894, and M. Koch, *E. K. F. Schulze und E. T. W. Hoffmann* (D.N.L., 147 [1889]), 119 ff.

respects similar to his own. During these years, music was Hoffmann's chief amusement, and when the French occupied Warsaw in 1806 and deprived him of his government position, he turned to it as a profession. After months of destitution, he obtained an appointment as musical director of the theatre at Bamberg, where, in spite of financial difficulties, he remained for about five years: he then joined, in a similar capacity, a travelling company of players, who had their headquarters at Dresden. During this period, Hoffmann composed several operas, a symphony, a Mass, besides lesser works, and, what was more important, turned in earnest to literature, as a means of eking out his income. His first book was the *Phantasiestücke in Callots Manier* (4 vols., 1814-15), the Callot here imitated being a French artist of the beginning of the seventeenth century, whose grotesque style appealed strongly to Hoffmann. This collection of fantastic stories and essays, to which Jean Paul wrote the preface, made Hoffmann's reputation. Besides the admirable story of *Der goldne Topf*, the most noteworthy contents are the *Kreisleriana*, musical opinions placed in the mouth of Johann Kreisler, who was evidently suggested by the musician in Wackenroder's *Herzensergiessungen*. Kapellmeister Kreisler, in whom art and life are blended in a characteristically Romantic manner, is Hoffmann's musical self:—

Phantasiestücke in Callots Manier, 1814.

> "Wo ist er her?—Niemand weiss es!—Wer waren seine Eltern?—Es ist unbekannt!—Wessen Schüler ist er?—Eines guten Meisters, denn er spielt vortrefflich, und da er Verstand und Bildung hat, kann man ihn wohl dulden, ja ihm sogar den Unterricht in der Musik verstatten. . . . Die Freunde behaupteten: die Natur habe bei seiner Organisation ein neues Rezept versucht und der Versuch sei misslungen, indem seinem überreizbaren Gemüthe, seiner bis zur zerstörenden Flamme aufglühenden Phantasie zu wenig Phlegma beigemischt und so das Gleichgewicht zerstört worden, das dem Künstler durchaus nöthig sei, um mit der Welt zu leben und ihr Werke zu dichten, wie sie dieselben, selbst im höhern Sinn, eigentlich brauche."[1]

In 1814, Hoffmann obtained a fixed position in connection with the Kammergericht in Berlin, and from this time on, Berlin remained his home. He soon formed warm friendships with the Romantic writers of the capital, especially with Fouqué and Chamisso, and they met regularly, once

Hoffmann in Berlin.

[1] E. Grisebach's edition, 1, 21.

every week, as the "Serapionsbrüder," to discuss art and literature. Unfortunately, in Hoffmann's case, these evenings were followed by nights of hard drinking, when he squandered, in company unworthy of him, his brilliant wit and imagination. The wild and unbalanced life he led could not last; he became the victim of spinal disease, and died in 1822, at the age of forty-six.

Die Elixiere des Teufels, 1815.

Die Elixiere des Teufels (1815), the most skilfully constructed of Hoffmann's longer works, might be described as an attempt to adapt the Gothic "tale of terror" to the Romantic novel; the subject, indeed, was possibly suggested to Hoffmann by Lewis's *Monk*. The supernatural paraphernalia of the "Sturm und Drang" romance, as it reappeared in the "Schicksalsdrama," is retained, but Hoffmann had also at his command the refined art and poetic "Stimmungsmalerei" of the Romanticists; and by means of hints and ingenious insinuations, he is able to awaken a shudder even in a sceptical reader. It is, none the less, detrimental to the story that it was not written with more restraint, kept more within the bounds of the probable; for the psychological development of the Capuchin monk, led astray by tasting the "devil's elixir," and ultimately brought to his knees in contrite repentance, is more interesting than are the adventures he goes through.

Nachtstücke, 1817.

In several of the *Nachtstücke* (1817), such as *Der Sandmann* and *Ignaz Denner*, Hoffmann's fondness for the supernatural is carried still further. In the first of these, for instance, the hero lives in a nightmare of morbid fancies, loves an automaton—automata and "Doppelgänger" were *idées fixes* in Hoffmann's imagination—and ends his life as a madman. In *Das Majorat*, the best Novelle of this collection, however, the gruesome elements are subordinated to a vivid description of scenes from the author's early life.

Klein Zaches, 1819.

Grotesque and morbid to the last degree is *Klein Zaches genannt Zinnober* (1819), the history of an "Alraune," or mandrake, a weird dwarf of German folklore, who had already appeared in Arnim's story of *Isabella von Ägypten*. "Klein Zaches" possesses the power of winning credit for the good that others do, and of making innocent people responsible for his crimes and misdeeds.

Die Serapionsbrüder, 1819-21.

The fairest estimate of Hoffmann's genius is to be obtained from the four volumes of *Die Serapionsbrüder* (1819-21), a

collection of stories, loosely connected, like those which form Tieck's *Phantasus*, by the conversations of the friends who tell them. An admirable character-study is that of *Rath Krespel*, with which *Die Serapionsbrüder* opens, and into *Die Fermate* the author skilfully weaves reminiscences of his own youth. Masterpieces of their kind are *Der Artushof*, a story of artist-life in Danzig, *Doge und Dogaressa*, of which Marino Falieri is the chief figure, a fine romance of old Nürnberg, *Meister Martin der Küfner und seine Gesellen*, and, in the third volume of the *Serapionsbrüder*, *Das Fräulein von Scuderi*, the most perfect story Hoffmann ever wrote. In these "Novellen" he cannot, it is true, altogether conceal his love for the "night side" of life, but it no longer plays so important a part as in *Die Elixiere des Teufels* and the *Nachtstücke*. This is also characteristic of Hoffmann's *Lebens-Ansichten des Katers Murr nebst fragmentarischer Biographie des Kapellmeisters Johannes Kreisler in zufälligen Makulaturblättern*. A romance more fantastically planned than this could not be imagined: a cat is supposed to write its memoirs on the proofs of Kreisler's biography, and the sheets are printed and bound together by mistake. Even Jean Paul hardly ever carried his humour to such extremes. The contents of the book, too, are extraordinarily confused; the cat is the "Philister," Kreissler the idealist and artist, and the whole is held together by a romantic love-story of which Kreissler is hero. The chief features of *Kater Murr* are, however, its humorous irony and satire. Two volumes appeared in 1821 and 1822, but Hoffmann did not live to complete it. Among his last writings were the "Novellen," *Meister Johannes Wacht* and *Der Feind*, the latter unfinished, and the admirable dialogue, *Des Vetters Eckfenster*.

Kater Murr, 1821-22.

Hoffmann is one of the masters of German prose literature, and of all the Romantic novelists he exerted the widest and most abiding influence. His writing is, in a high degree, plastic, a quality which is conspicuous in his power of endowing with reality the supernatural phantasms of his brain; "le poète," as Balzac said of him, "de ce qui n'a pas l'air d'exister, et qui néanmoins a vie,"[1] he made his imagined world more real than many of his contemporaries were able to make the life around them; and behind his creations, how-

[1] *Une fille d'Ève*, 6 (*La Comédie humaine*, Paris, 1842, 2, 200).

ever morbid they may be, is always to be found the German idealist and Romanticist. But the age and his own unbalanced character were against him; the stamp of decadence lay upon his art as upon his life. German music, however, and notably that kindred genius, Robert Schumann (1810-56), was deeply indebted to him, and, in France, his work was a weightier factor than that of either Goethe or Schiller.

Ludwig Tieck, 1773-1853.

To the same period as Hoffmann belongs also one of the leaders of the first Romantic School, Ludwig Tieck, who, in 1819, settled in Dresden, and in 1821 turned once more to fiction. His many "Novellen,"[1] which were all published about this time, are occasionally marred by being written with a purpose; but the solidity of their workmanship distinguishes them favourably from other stories of the age, and even from Tieck's own earlier work. *Die Gemälde* (1822), *Die Verlobung* (1823), and *Des Lebens Überfluss* (1839) are among the most effective of the collection; and *Der Mondsüchtige* (1831) shows that, in spite of the cooler irony of advancing years, Tieck was able to recall the Romantic enthusiasm of his youth. *Dichterleben* (1825) and *Der Tod des Dichters* (1833) are founded respectively on episodes in the lives of Shakespeare and Camoens, while *Der junge Tischlermeister* (1836) is a romance on the accepted Romantic model, and owes much to *Wilhelm Meister*. Most important of all is the fragment of a historical novel, *Der Aufruhr in den Cevennen* (1826), which has, not unjustly, been placed beside *Heinrich von Ofterdingen* and *Die Kronenwächter* as one of the typical examples of Romantic fiction; Tieck—as is also to be seen in a later book, *Vittoria Accorombona* (1840)—had an undeveloped talent for the historical novel. As dramaturge, from 1825 onwards, of the Court Theatre in Dresden, he infused into the performances of the German stage an earnest, artistic spirit, the effects of which may be traced in the experiments which Immermann made some years afterwards at Düsseldorf. In 1841, Tieck received an invitation from Friedrich Wilhelm IV. to make Berlin his home; and here he died in 1853.

Der Aufruhr in den Cevennen, 1826.

A writer in the age of Romantic decay, whose position was solitary and in many respects anomalous, is Ernst Konrad

[1] *Gesammelte Novellen*, 14 vols., Breslau, 1835-42. On this period of Tieck's life, cp. H. von Friesen, *L. Tieck*, 2 vols., Vienna, 1871.

Friedrich Schulze (1789-1817).[1] Schulze's temperament originally bore some resemblance to Wieland's, but his life having been imbittered by the death of a woman for whom he had a passionate, almost morbid affection, he found the spirituality of the Romanticists more in harmony with his feelings than Wieland's light frivolity. His two epics, *Cäcilie* (1818)—the fulfilment of a vow to erect a monument to his lost love—and *Die bezauberte Rose* (1818), are essentially Romantic poems, but Schulze is Romantic in an old-world way that reminds the reader of the epics of Ariosto: his poetry has an archaic colouring which is obviously artificial, the unreality being further heightened by the allegorical form he chose to give his work. With the exception of Brentano in his *Erfindung des Rosenkranzes*, Schulze was the only German poet of eminence at this time who wrote epics. For the great epics of Romanticism we must look not to German, but to the Slavonic poets, Mickiewicz and Puschkin. E. K. F. Schulze, 1789-1817

An interesting phase of Romanticism is to be seen in the work of Friedrich Rückert,[2] who was born at Schweinfurt in 1788. Rückert has already been mentioned as a singer of the War of Liberation. His *Geharnischte Sonette* (1814), although written in 1812, were published too late to have helped to kindle the revolt against Napoleon, and even had they appeared in time, their author had not the power, possessed by lesser poets like Hoffmann von Fallersleben, of expressing his patriotic sentiments in a way that appealed immediately to all classes: moreover, of all lyric forms the sonnet is least adapted for this purpose. As his patriotism began to cool, Rückert returned to the Romantic world, from which the war had rudely torn him, and where he was unquestionably most at home. In 1817, he visited Italy, and found that his fame had preceded him among the German poets and artists resident in Rome: in the following year, he was in Vienna, zealously engaged in studying oriental literatures, his guide being the same Joseph von Hammer-Purgstall, who had awakened Goethe's interest in Hafiz, and revealed to a generation of Austrian poets the poetic wealth of the East. Three years later, Rückert settled in Coburg; Friedrich Rückert, 1788-1866.

[1] *Poetische Werke*, 3rd ed., 5 vols., Leipzig, 1855; selections edited by M. Koch, in D.N.L., 147 [1889], 1 ff.

[2] Editions of Rückert's works by L. Laistner, 6 vols., Stuttgart, 1896, and C. Beyer, 6 vols., Leipzig, 1900.

in 1826, he was appointed to a professorship in Erlangen, which, in 1841, he exchanged for one in Berlin. The Prussian capital, however, was little to his taste, and he retired not long afterwards to his country house near Coburg, where he died in 1866.

Oriental poetry.

Rückert rendered valuable services to German literature as an interpreter of oriental life and poetry. In *Östliche Rosen* (1822), he took, for instance, Hafiz as his model, and this work was followed, four years later, by a translation in verse and rhymed prose of the *Makamen* of Hariri, the merry adventures of an Arabian rogue. He also published versions of the Sanskrit *Nal und Damajanti* (1828), of the Chinese *Schi-King* (1833), and the Persian *Rostem und Suhrab* (1838), besides a poetic Gospel-Harmony, *Das Leben Jesu* (1839), and a collection of the oldest Arabian Volkslieder, the *Hamasa* (1846). The most ambitious of his works is *Die Weisheit des Brahmanen*, a long didactic poem, or rather collection of verse and aphorisms, which appeared between 1836 and 1839 in six volumes; and even this list does not exhaust his labours, several of his translations not having been published until after his death. The passive atmosphere of oriental literature appealed strongly to Rückert's temperament, but his ability as a translator depended even to a greater extent upon his mastery of language and verse: in this respect, he is second only to Platen among modern German poets, and indeed, of Rückert's many followers, Platen—he wrote *Ghaselen* in 1824—takes the first place. Towards the middle of the century, Leopold Schefer (1784-1862) and G. F. Daumer (1800-75) imitated Hafiz, and in 1851, Friedrich Bodenstedt published his *Lieder des Mirza Schaffy*, to which we shall return in a subsequent chapter.

Die Weisheit des Brahmanen, 1836-39.

As an original poet, Rückert owed his reputation to the collection of lyrics called *Liebesfrühling* (1823), and the *Haus- und Jahreslieder*, written between 1832 and 1838. The *Kindertodtenlieder* (1834), on the death of two of his children, are pathetic, but somewhat diffuse; his plays, *Saul und David* (1844) and *Kaiser Heinrich IV.* (1844), have few dramatic qualities, and had no success on the stage. But his early lyrics are of the true Romantic type; without being so naïvely popular as Wilhelm Müller, Rückert sometimes wrote verses that were as harmonious as Eichendorff's.

Lyric poetry.

He was never a greater poet than when he sang in the simple tone of the Volkslied :—

" O süsse Mutter,
Ich kann nicht spinnen,
Ich kann nicht sitzen
Im Stüblein innen
Im engen Haus ;
Es stockt das Rädchen,
Es reisst das Fädchen,
O süsse Mutter,
Ich muss hinaus."[1]

In a love-song like the following, beautiful as it is, the sincerity of feeling is veiled by an exaggerated oriental imagery which, as we shall afterwards see, reappeared in Heine's poetry :—

" Du meine Seele, du mein Herz,
Du meine Wonn', o du mein Schmerz,
Du meine Welt, in der ich lebe,
Mein Himmel du, darein ich schwebe,
O du mein Grab, in das hinab
Ich ewig meinen Kummer gab !
Du bist die Ruh', du bist der Frieden,
Du bist der Himmel mir beschieden.
Dass du mich liebst, macht mich mir werth,
Dein Blick hat mich vor mir verklärt,
Du hebst mich liebend über mich,
Mein guter Geist, mein bessres Ich ![2]

More incongruous elements in Rückert's songs are an affected subtlety of expression and a love of quaint antitheses, which he had also learned from his oriental models. He wrote with the ease and fluency of a Persian poet ; he had nothing of the self-concentration which made Eichendorff and Heine poets of the first rank, and many even of his finest poems are marred by diffuseness and want of form. What, however, was chiefly missing in Rückert's work was a strong personal note ; his nature was almost exclusively receptive. Thus, he is at his best when his imagination is held in check by the necessity of reproducing what others have expressed ; as a mediator between Germany and the East, he cannot be too highly estimated. He came, it is true, too late to be a pioneer, but it was he who first gave tangible form to what Friedrich Schlegel had in his mind when he wrote his *Weisheit der Inder*. Goethe, recognising this, hailed Rückert as a worthy fellow-worker in

[1] C. Beyer's edition, 2, 33.

[2] Ibid., 1, 302 f.

helping to bring about that era of "Weltlitteratur," which was one of the old poet's cherished ideals.

Poetry of the Greek Revolt.

The lyrics of several young writers, whose sympathies were with the Greeks in their struggle for independence, can with less justification be included under the heading of "Romantic Decay";[1] the poetry of the Greek Revolt formed a transition from Romanticism to the political lyric of "Jung-Deutschland" and the Revolution of 1848. Of the poets who, as admirers and imitators of Byron, took part in the political movement, the ablest was Wilhelm Müller,[2] a native of Dessau, who was born in 1794 and died in 1827. Müller's *Lieder der Griechen* (1821-24) were Germany's chief contribution to the literature inspired by the Greek struggle. But the sentimental patriotism of these songs does more honour to the singer's enthusiasm than to his poetic genius, and the long trochaic and iambic lines in which he wrote are monotonous to a modern ear accustomed to more subtle rhythms. Apart from his Greek songs, Müller is a master of the popular lyric; in a higher degree than any other Romantic singer, even Chamisso, to whom he bears some resemblance, he is the poet of the German Volk. His love-poetry—the cycle of songs, *Die schöne Müllerin*, for example, which the music of Franz Schubert (1797-1828) has made universally known — has nothing in it of the subtle suggestiveness of Goethe or Eichendorff, nor does it, on the other hand, fall into the occasionally false sentimentality of Chamisso; the Volkslied itself is not more simple and direct. To see Müller's art to full advantage we must turn to a song like—

Wilhelm Müller, 1794-1827.

"Wer schlägt so rasch an die Fenster mir
Mit schwanken grünen Zweigen?
Der junge Morgenwind ist hier
Und will sich lustig zeigen.

'Heraus, heraus, du Menschensohn!'
So ruft der kecke Geselle,
'Es schwärmt von Frühlingswonnen schon
Vor deiner Kammerschwelle.

[1] Cp. R. F. Arnold, *Der deutsche Philhellenismus* in *Euphorion* (Ergänzungsheft, 2), 1896.

[2] *Gedichte*, edited by C. Müller (Reclam's *Universal-Bibliothek*, 3261-3264), Leipzig, 1894. Cp. F. Max-Müller (his son) in the *Allg. deutsche Biographie* 22 (1885), 683 ff.

'Hörst du die Käfer summen nicht?
Hörst du das Glas nicht klirren,
Wenn sie, betäubt von Duft und Licht,
Hart an die Scheiben schwirren?'"[1]

The first collection of Müller's songs, *Gedichte aus den hinterlassenen Papieren eines reisenden Waldhornisten*, was published in 1821, a second volume appearing in 1824. After the *Schöne Müllerin*, the lyrics most characteristic of the poet's genius are the *Reiselieder*—for Müller, like all the poets of the time, loved a "Wanderleben":—

"In die grüne Welt hinein
Zieh' ich mit dem Morgenschein,
Abendlust und Abendleid
Hinter mir so weit, so weit!"[2]

But Müller wrote too easily, and his poetry belongs, in its range of ideas, to an age of naïve feeling and thinking. Yet, of all his contemporaries, none has a better claim than he to be regarded as Heine's forerunner; from him, Heine learned the beauty that lay in the simplest metres, and the fine cycles of poems, *Muscheln von der Insel Rügen* (1825) and *Lieder aus dem Meerbusen von Salerno* (1827), are not unworthy of comparison with Heine's lyrics of the North Sea.

Among the other "Greek" poets at this time, Chamisso's friend, Franz von Gaudy (1800-40),[3] deserves mention. Gaudy was a voluminous writer, who, in his frequently trivial and frivolous verse, imitated Béranger and Heine. His prose sketches and "Novellen" have, however, a more lasting value than his verse. Chamisso himself was also carried away by sympathy for Greece, and poems like *Lord Byron's letzte Liebe* (1827), and the cycle *Chios* (1829), entitle him to a place among the members of this group. Julius Mosen (1803-67)[4] was another poet who combined the idealism of the "Romantik" with a passionate enthusiasm for Greece and Poland; the Greek revolt is the subject of his novel, *Der Kongress zu Verona* (1842), while his famous ballad, *Die letzten Zehn vom vierten Regiment* (1832), describes an episode in Poland's struggle for freedom. Mosen's epics (*Ahasver*, 1838) and "Novellen" (*Bilder im Moose*, 1846) appealed to

F. von Gaudy, 1800-40.

J. Mosen, 1803-67.

[1] *Morgenlied* (*Gedichte*, 180).
[2] *Gedichte*, 46.
[3] A selection of Gaudy's works, edited by K. Siegen, 3 vols., Leipzig, 1896.
[4] *Sämmtliche Werke*, 6 vols., Leipzig, 1880.

the taste of the time, his many romantic dramas (*Heinrich der Finkler*, 1836; *Cola Rienzi*, 1837; *Otto III.*, 1839) had a temporary success, while his work, as director of the Ducal Theatre in Oldenburg, was of real importance for the history of the German stage. The most eminent German poet who sang of Poland was August von Platen, whose noble *Polenlieder* (1830-31) were published after his death, but almost all the younger lyric poets of the time gave voice to the national sympathy with the Polish cause.

CHAPTER VII.

HISTORICAL FICTION AND DRAMA. IMMERMANN AND PLATEN.

ALTHOUGH since the days of "Sturm und Drang" historical novels had formed a large group of German fiction, their quality had, on the whole, been indifferent; the isolated experiments of the Romanticists, such as Arnim's *Kronenwächter*, stood so far above the "Ritterromane," and had such entirely different aims, that there could be little question of mutual influence. In point of fact, historical fiction first asserted itself in Germany, under the vigorous stimulus of the *Waverley Novels*, the two most eminent novelists who looked up to Scott as their master being the Swabian, Wilhelm Hauff (1802-27), and the North German, Wilhelm H. Häring, best known by his pseudonym, "Willibald Alexis" (1798-1871). The historical novel.

Although Hauff[1] died in 1827, at the age of twenty-five, he left a large number of admirable stories; his instinctive genius for fiction and his attractive style concealed the want of originality and independence, natural in a beginner. *Lichtenstein* (1826), a story of Würtemberg at the beginning of the sixteenth century, is, although closely modelled on Scott, a successful imitation. *Mittheilungen aus den Memoiren Satans* (1826-27) shows unmistakably the influence of Hoffmann, while in *Der Mann im Monde* (1826), Hauff began by intending to write in the style of H. Clauren (an anagram for Carl Heun, 1771-1854), the author of some forty volumes of worthless sentimental fiction: before, however, he had proceeded very far, he changed his mind, and ingeniously converted *Der Mann im Monde* into a satire on his model. Of Hauff's shorter stories, *Das Bild des Kaisers* (1828) is the most W. Hauff, 1802-27.

[1] *Sämmtliche Werke*, ed. H. Fischer, 6 vols., Stuttgart, 1885, and F. Bobertag, 5 vols. (D.N.L., 156-158 [1891-92]).

characteristic, in spite of its frequent concessions to the taste of the time; but his masterpiece is undoubtedly the *Phantasien im Bremer Rathskeller* (1827), in which his own genius is once more reinforced by what he had learned from Hoffmann.

W. H. Häring, ("W. Alexis"), 1798-1871.

The ablest German writer who graduated in the school of Scott was Willibald Alexis, who began by passing off imitations of Scott as translations (*Walladmor*, 1823-24; *Schloss Avalon*, 1827). In 1832, Alexis published *Cabanis*, an original novel, with his native country, the Mark of Brandenburg, as background, and Frederick the Great as central figure; and, during the next twenty-five years, he wrote many volumes of historical fiction, besides being busily engaged in other literary work. Alexis did not, however, live through the journalistic epoch of German literature—an epoch to be discussed in the next chapter—without himself taking on some of its colour, without being influenced by the anti-Romantic philosophy of "Jungdeutschland"; and two of his novels, *Das Haus Düsterweg* (1835) and *Zwölf Nächte* (1838), have all the features of "Young German" fiction. Even the six historical novels,[1] upon which his reputation now rests, are not altogether free from the spirit of that epoch. *Der Roland von Berlin* (1840), the first of the six, depicts the struggle between the Hohenzollerns and the burgher classes of Brandenburg in the fifteenth century; the scene of *Der falsche Waldemar* (1842) is laid a century earlier; while *Die Hosen des Herrn von Bredow* (1846-48)—most successful of all Alexis' novels—is a romance of the Reformation period. His next book, *Ruhe ist die erste Bürgerpflicht* (1852), is an admirable story of the Napoleonic invasion in the gloomy days before the battle of Jena, and was followed by *Isegrimm* (1852) and *Dorothe* (1856), neither of which, however, was as popular as the stories that preceded them. Of all the continental novelists who imitated Scott, Alexis attained the greatest independence of his master.

H. Zschokke, 1771-1848.

While even the name of another fertile writer of this school, Karl Spindler (1796-1855), the author of *Der Jude* (1827), a historical novel of the fifteenth century, is long since forgotten, the novels of Heinrich Zschokke (1771-1848)[2] are still

[1] *Vaterländische Romane*, 8 vols., Berlin, 1884.

[2] *Ausgewählte Novellen und Dichtungen*, 10 vols., 11th ed., Aarau, 1874. Cp. F. Bobertag, *Erzählende Prosa der klassischen Periode*, 2 (D.N.L., 137 [1886]), 231 ff.

popular. A native of Magdeburg, Zschokke, at the age of twenty-five, chose Switzerland as his home, and, for the rest of his life, worked untiringly, both as a writer and as a social and political reformer, in the service of his adopted country. He was a prolific author, his works ranging from history to forestry, from prose fiction to lyric and religious poetry. Before settling in Switzerland, he published a widely-read bandit-novel, *Abällino, der grosse Bandit* (1794), in which the ideas and tendencies of the "Sturm und Drang" are given full rein. But his best stories were written on the model of the *Waverley Novels* and are to be found in *Bilder aus der Schweiz* (1824-26); in this series appeared the novels, *Addrich im Moos* and *Der Freihof von Aarau.* Another widely-read book by Zschokke is *Das Goldmacherdorf* (1817), an imitation of Pestalozzi's educational novel, *Lienhard und Gertrud;* but popular as was the *Goldmacherdorf*, it never became such a household book in Switzerland as the *Stunden der Andacht* (1809-16), a collection of devotional poems with marked rationalistic tendencies.

The drama.

The drama, or at least the North German drama,—for it was otherwise, as we shall see, in Austria,—had, with Kleist's death, received a blow from which it did not soon recover. The Romanticists tried again and again to gain a footing on the stage, but they were, for the most part, outrivalled by worthless competitors. Thus it is little wonder that the critics and theorists of this period—Tieck in his *Dramaturgische Blätter* (1825-26) and Immermann in the *Düsseldörfer Anfänge* (1840) —did not view the future of the theatre with very sanguine eyes. Indeed, between Kleist and Friedrich Hebbel, North Germany produced only one dramatist of genius, Christian Dietrich Grabbe (1801-36),[1] and he was too romantically unbalanced easily to adapt himself to the requirements of the stage. An unruly genius, Grabbe recalls the age of "Sturm und Drang" rather than that of Romantic decay. His first play, *Herzog Theodor von Gothland* (1822), begun while the author was still at school, outdoes, in its horrors, the most extravagant productions of the "Geniezeit," but Tieck, whose opinion Grabbe sought, was not blind to its poetic promise.

C. D. Grabbe, 1801-36.

[1] *Sämmtliche Werke*, ed. O. Blumenthal, 4 vols., Detmold, 1874; a new edition by E. Grisebach, 4 vols., Berlin, 1902. Cp. F. Bobertag, *C. D. Grabbe, M. Beer und E. von Schenk* (D.N.L., 161 [1889]), 1 ff.

A literary satire published in the same year, *Scherz, Satire, Ironie und tiefere Bedeutung*, did not improve Grabbe's position or his prospects. But in the summer of 1828, he put the finishing strokes to *Don Juan und Faust* (1829). Grabbe here aimed at combining in one drama the two great creations of Goethe and Mozart; his poetic imagination shrank from nothing, and the result was a play unsuited for the stage, but full of dramatic life and genuine poetry. *Don Juan und Faust* was followed by two ambitious historical dramas, *Kaiser Friedrich Barbarossa* (1829) and *Kaiser Heinrich VI.* (1830), which were intended to open a series of tragedies on the Hohenstaufen dynasty: these plays are not without striking dramatic situations and moments, but they are marred by the empty rhetoric into which Grabbe's grandiose language too often falls. Gorgeous, again, is the canvas on which the last episodes in Napoleon's career are painted, *Napoleon, oder die hundert Tage* (1831). This is as far from being a normal drama as anything Grabbe wrote—it is only a succession of magnificent scenes in Elba, Paris, and on the field of Waterloo—but each scene is a masterpiece of dramatic characterisation. Of all the dramas which in the course of tne nineteenth century have been written round Napoleon, Grabbe's unquestionably takes the first place. The poet, however, was going rapidly downhill: for his unhappy marriage he alone had been to blame, and with every year he grew more addicted to drink. In Düsseldorf, Immermann offered him a helping hand, but this only staved off for a time the inevitable end; spinal disease set in, and he died before completing his thirty-fifth year. His last two works, *Hannibal* (1835) and *Die Hermannsschlacht* (1838), add nothing to his standing as a poet.

Don Juan und Faust, 1829.

Napoleon, 1831.

Mention must also be made here of Michael Beer (1800-33), a native of Berlin, who, in his tragedies, *Der Paria* (in one act, 1826) and *Struensee* (1829), occasionally anticipates the psychological methods of Hebbel. Beer's friend, Eduard von Schenk (1788-1841), on the other hand,—as is to be seen from his drama *Belisar* (1829),—was content to imitate the Romantic drama.[1] Where Grabbe and Beer failed, Ernst Raupach (1784-1852), an inferior Kotzebue, a playwright desti-

M. Beer, 1800-33.

E. Raupach, 1784-1852.

[1] Beer's *Sämmtliche Werke*, Leipzig, 1836; Schenk's *Schauspiele*, 3 vols., Stuttgart, 1829-35. Cp. F. Bobertag, *l.c.*, 197 ff.

tute of poetic ideals, won popularity. Raupach's many historical dramas—including a series of no less than twenty-four on the Hohenstaufens—are long forgotten even by name; and Raupach himself would also be forgotten, were it not for the witty attacks made on him by Platen, Immermann, and Heine.

K. von Holtei, 1798-1880.

The work of Karl von Holtei (1798-1880),[1] a native of Breslau, occupies a place to itself in the drama of the century. Holtei's most characteristic plays were "Liederspiele"—that is to say, adaptations of the French "vaudeville" to the German stage. *Der alte Feldherr* (1826) and *Lenore* (1828), the latter a dramatisation of Bürger's poem, owed their widespread popularity to the songs they contained; while *Lorbeerbaum und Bettelstab* (1840), an experiment in a higher form of comedy, is marred by excessive sentimentality. As playwright, actor, and theatre-manager, Holtei led a checkered, unsettled life—it is vividly described in his autobiography, *Vierzig Jahre* (1843-50)—until about 1850, when, growing weary of his wanderings, he lived for many years in Graz. From 1864 on, his home was Breslau, where he died in 1880. Following Hebel's example, Holtei also wrote poems in his native dialect, and many of the *Schlesischen Gedichte* (1830) have become Volkslieder. His novels (*Die Vagabunden*, 1851; *Der letzte Komödiant*, 1863) are interesting in so far as he draws on his own experiences, but they are loosely constructed, and the character-drawing is superficial. Among other dramatists, the Danish Romanticist, Adam Oehlenschläger (1779-1850),[2] who was ambitious to acquire a reputation in Germany, must be mentioned, if only as the author of a German tragedy, *Correggio* (1816), which was frequently played in its day. His many plays on Scandinavian themes were less to German tastes.

The Romantic opera.

Although, as regards dramatic literature, these years of Romantic decay were unfavourable, the opera or music-drama passed through a remarkable phase of development. In 1805, Ludwig von Beethoven (1770-1827) created the first markedly Romantic opera, *Fidelio*, the text of which was of French origin. The representative musical dramatist, however, was Karl Maria von Weber (1786-1826); Friedrich Kind's *Der*

K. M. von Weber, 1786-1826.

[1] *Erzählende Schriften*, 39 vols., Breslau, 1861-66; *Theater*, 6 vols., Berlin, 1867; *Schlesische Gedichte*, 20th ed., Berlin, 1894.

[2] *Werke* (in German), 2nd ed., 21 vols., Breslau, 1839.

Freischütz, with Weber's music (1821), was at once accepted by the nation as the ideal of a Romantic music-drama. This work was followed by *Euryanthe* (1823) and *Oberon* (1826), both of which, however, were placed at a disadvantage owing to the mediocrity of their texts. Besides Weber, the chief opera-composers in the first half of the century were Ludwig Spohr (1784-1859), H. A. Marschner (1795-1861)—the composer of *Der Vampir* (1828), *Der Templer und die Jüdin* (based on Scott's *Ivanhoe*, 1829), and *Hans Heiling* (1838) — Albert Lortzing (1803-51), the master of the Romantic "Volksoper," and Otto Nicolai (1810-49). Finally, in 1850, was produced Robert Schumann's (1810-56) only opera, *Genoveva*. A less healthy feature in the music of this period was the so-called "grand opera," of which Michael Beer's brother, Jakob, known as Giacomo Meyerbeer (1791-1864), was the leading exponent; but Meyerbeer found a more favourable soil for his art in France than in Germany, and the texts of his works were written by French playwrights. Thus, a national German opera which, as we shall see in a later chapter, culminated in the work of Richard Wagner, was not the least valuable bequest which the nation received from the Romantic movement.

K. L. Immermann, 1796-1840.

One of the last—from the standpoint of literary evolution, the very last—of the Romanticists is Karl Leberecht Immermann,[1] who was born at Magdeburg in 1796, and died in 1840. He studied law at Halle, fought at Waterloo, and, in 1827, was appointed Landgerichtsrat at Düsseldorf. Immermann experimented, more or less, in all forms of Romantic literature: he wrote, for instance, a "Fate tragedy," *Die Verschollene* (1822); he followed in Arnim's footsteps with a drama on *Cardenio und Celinde* (1826), and in *Das Trauerspiel in Tirol* (1828), the hero of which is the famous Tyrolese patriot, Andreas Hofer, he introduced supernatural episodes in the Romantic style. *Alexis* (1832), a trilogy based on the history of Peter the Great, had even less success than *Das Trauerspiel in Tirol;* but in *Merlin, eine Mythe* (1832), Immermann created, if not a drama for the theatre, at least a dramatic poem of singular depth and beauty. *Merlin* is, as the author himself said, the "Tragödie des

Merlin, 1832.

[1] *Werke*, ed. R. Boxberger, 20 vols., Berlin, 1883; also a selection by M. Koch, 4 vols. (D.N.L., 159, 160 [1887-88]).

Widerspruchs": the son of Satan and a Christian virgin, Merlin is a kind of Anti-Christ who is racked by the antitheses of existence; the spiritual and the sensual, renunciation and enjoyment, are at war within him, and he dies, baffled in endeavouring to reconcile them. *Merlin* was the last of the many attempts which the German "Romantik" made to win for its ideas the great secular mysteries associated with the Reformation Faust and the medieval legends of the Holy Graal.

Die Epigonen, 1836.

In 1836 appeared Immermann's first important novel, *Die Epigonen*. This work, which describes the relations in which a young aristocrat of Bremen stands towards several women, contains the essence of Immermann's own personality. He felt to the core that he, like his hero, was an "Epigone," the "late born" of an age then rapidly passing away; and the novel contains the tragedy of his life:—

"Wir können nicht leugnen, dass über unsre Häupter eine gefährliche Weltepoche hereingebrochen ist. Unglücks haben die Menschen zu allen Zeiten genug gehabt; der Fluch des gegenwärtigen Geschlechts ist aber, sich auch ohne alles besondre Leid unselig zu fühlen. Ein ödes Wanken und Schwanken, ein lächerliches Sich-ernst-stellen und Zerstreutsein, ein Haschen, man weiss nicht, wonach, eine Furcht vor Schrecknissen, die um so unheimlicher sind, als sie keine Gestalt haben! Es ist, als ob die Menschheit, in ihrem Schifflein auf einem übergewaltigen Meere umhergeworfen, an einer moralischen Seekrankheit leide, deren Ende kaum abzusehn ist. . . . Wir sind, um in einem Wort das ganze Elend auszusprechen, Epigonen und tragen an der Last, die jeder Erb- und Nachgeborenschaft anzukleben pflegt."[1]

Die Epigonen is largely indebted to *Wilhelm Meister;* indeed, it was virtually the last Romantic novel for which Goethe's work served as model.[2] Like *Meister*, *Die Epigonen* has an ethical background,—the struggle between the new industrial classes and the old aristocracy,—and the problems it discusses bring it into touch with the social philosophy of Goethe's later years.

Münchhausen, 1838.

In 1838, Immermann published his second romance, *Münchhausen, eine Geschichte in Arabesken*, which rivalled the first in

[1] Boxberger's edition, 5, 123 f.

[2] Tieck's *Der junge Tischlermeister* (see above, p. 484) also appeared in 1836, but it was written, for the most part, twenty years earlier.

popularity. As a novel, *Münchhausen* cannot be compared with its predecessor: it is a receptacle for all manner of opinions thrown together without order, a bulwark from behind which the author makes satirical attacks upon his time. Immermann is here obviously under the influence of Jean Paul, whose carelessness with regard to form he imitates; but where Jean Paul, or even Hoffmann, might have justified himself, Immermann is not convincing. The fantastic imagination required for a work of this kind was foreign to his nature, and he was not sufficiently gifted with humour. In the conglomerate mass of *Münchhausen*, however, one gem lies buried, the "Novelle" *Der Oberhof*. Here, at least, Immermann is not an "Epigone"; *Der Oberhof* is his master-work and the finest short story of peasant-life that was written before the middle of the century. Arnim and Brentano had taken the first steps towards faithfully portraying the German peasant; what they began, Immermann completed in the sturdy Westphalian "Hofschulze," who is the hero of *Der Oberhof*.

Düsseldorfer Anfänge, 1840.

Immermann stood in one other respect at the beginning of a new era rather than at the close of an old one: between 1835 and 1838, he took an active share in the direction of the theatre in Düsseldorf.[1] What Tieck had attempted in Dresden, in his impracticable, Romantic way, Immermann realised at Düsseldorf; he produced the masterpieces of dramatic literature, above all, plays by Shakespeare and Calderon, as they had never previously been performed on the stage; and since these dramaturgic experiments of his—the record of them will be found in his *Düsseldorfer Anfänge* (1840)—the German theatre has occupied the leading position in Europe as an institution for interpreting dramatic poetry. A finely wrought, although not inspired, version of *Tristan und Isolde* (published in 1842) was Immermann's last work, but he did not live to finish it.

Writing at so late a date, Immermann naturally came into conflict with the pioneers of the post-Romantic epoch, although, strange to say, his enemies did not belong to the ranks of "Young Germany"; indeed, "Young Germany," as represented by Heine, greeted his work in a friendly spirit. His most ruthless critic was August Graf von Platen-Haller-

[1] Cp. R. Fellner, *Geschichte einer deutschen Musterbühne*, Stuttgart, 1888.

münde.[1] Born at Ansbach, in the same year as Immermann, Platen occupies a somewhat anomalous position in literature: a bitter antagonist of Romanticism as he found it, he was, at the same time, no partisan of "Young Germany." He began as an imitator of the *Westöstliche Divan* in 1821, and three years later published a collection of poems in oriental forms, entitled *Ghaselen*. These were followed by *Sonette aus Venedig* (1825), the finest collection of sonnets in the German tongue. In these poems Platen appears as the least subjective of all German poets; statuesque and cold, his sonnets possess a wonderful classic beauty, which was as little in harmony with the poet's time as with his nationality. One of them must here serve as an example of Platen's art:—

A. von Platen Hallermünde, 1796-1835.

Sonette aus Venedig, 1825.

"Venedig liegt nur noch im Land der Träume,
Und wirft nur Schatten her aus alten Tagen,
Es liegt der Leu der Republik erschlagen,
Und öde feiern seines Kerkers Räume.

Die ehrnen Hengste, die durch salz'ge Schäume
Dahergeschleppt, auf jener Kirche ragen,
Nicht mehr dieselben sind sie, ach sie tragen
Des korsikan'schen Uberwinders Zäume.

Wo ist das Volk von Königen geblieben,
Das diese Marmorhäuser durfte bauen,
Die nun verfallen und gemach zerstieben?

Nur selten finden auf der Enkel Brauen
Der Ahnen grosse Züge sich geschrieben,
An Dogengräbern in den Stein gehauen."[2]

In 1826, Italy became his permanent home. The antique now appeared to him, as to Goethe a generation before, an antidote to the extravagance of the German spirit; and, as Goethe had turned from the "Sturm und Drang" to the literature of Greece, so Platen sought in un-German metres a refuge from the degeneration of Romanticism. But, after all, he was still a Romanticist when he formed his dramatic poem, *Der gläserne Pantoffel* (1824), out of the fairy-tales of *Schneewittchen* and *Aschenbrödel;* he was a Romanticist when he chose stories from the *Arabian Nights* as the materials of his last epic, *Die Abbasiden* (1834); he is, above all, Romantic

[1] *Sämmtliche Werke*, edited by C. C. Redlich, 3 vols., Berlin, 1883; also by K. Goedeke, 2nd ed., Stuttgart, 1882.
[2] C. C. Redlich's edition, 1, 160 f.

in the meaning which the Schlegels gave to that word, when he expresses his poetic ideas in Romance metres and rhythms.

At the same time, Platen realised that Romanticism had fallen upon evil days. The "Schicksalstragödie" awakened his virulent hatred, and, in 1826, he satirised it effectually in *Die verhängnisvolle Gabel*. A fork here takes the place of the dagger by which, in the typical "fate tragedy," the family ancestress meets her death, and before the close of Platen's drama, a dozen descendants have been stabbed by the "fatal fork." *Der romantische Ödipus* (1829) is a satire on the more general aspects of Romanticism, especially on its formlessness and its love for experimenting with new and uncouth metres; and here the target of Platen's wit was, above all, Immermann ("Nimmermann"), who had kindled his wrath by a word of adverse criticism. Both these plays were inspired by Tieck's satirical dramas; but Platen went to work more seriously than his predecessor; he aspired to be a German Aristophanes, and even strove to imitate the Greek dramatist's metrical variety. He failed, however, to attain his object, just as Tieck and Heine, as every modern German satirist, is bound to fail; he is merely a literary satirist, where Aristophanes attacked political and social abuses. To find the real Aristophanic satirists of German literature, we must go back to the opponents of the Reformation.

Die verhängnisvolle Gabel, 1826.

Der romantische Ödipus, 1829.

Platen died at Syracuse, in 1835, at the age of thirty-nine. His *Tagebücher*,[1] which have recently been published in full, are his best biography: these extraordinarily detailed records of the poet's life disclose the personality which one seeks in vain beneath the smooth objectivity of his verse. His place in literature depends upon his command of language and metre; he is without question the most perfect artist among German poets, a master of beautiful form, and his fine sonnet, *Grabschrift*, shows that he was conscious of his peculiar merits:—

> "Ich war ein Dichter, und empfand die Schläge
> Der bösen Zeit, in welcher ich entsprossen;
> Doch schon als Jüngling hab' ich Ruhm genossen,
> Und auf die Sprache drückt' ich mein Gepräge."[2]

[1] Edited by G. von Laubmann and L. von Scheffler, 2 vols., Stuttgart, 1896-1900.

[2] C. C. Redlich's edition, 1, 658 f.

CHAPTER VIII.

"YOUNG GERMANY."

EVERY movement of positive value in literature sets out with the object of sweeping away the conventions and unrealities of the preceding age, and of bringing poetry into closer relation to reality. So the Romantic movement had begun, and, in the same way, began the revolt against Romanticism, which has now to be considered. In its decay, as we have seen, Romanticism lost all touch with life: it became fantastic and insincere. A reaction was inevitable, and, for this reaction, we have to look to the writers who form the group known as "das junge Deutschland."[1] These "Young Germans" repudiated the Romantic spirit—they laughed to scorn the "mondbeglänzte Zaubernacht" and the quixotic search for the "blaue Blume"—but they had nothing better, not even a healthy æsthetic realism, to put in its place; they employed literature merely in the service of material and political ends. "Young Germany," in fact, was a political rather than a literary movement; in the history of literature, it marks an era of depression. At the same time, the intellectual development of modern Germany would have been much less rapid had it not come through this phase — a phase which was an indispensable forerunner of unification forty years afterwards. Under "Young Germany," the nation became political, and the newspaper a force; German authors, following in the footsteps of their colleagues in France, turned from metaphysical dreams and medieval poetry to the social questions of the moment. The delicate

"Das junge Deutschland."

[1] Cp. J. Proelss, *Das junge Deutschland*, Stuttgart, 1892; G. Brandes, *Det unge Tyskland* (in *Hovedströmninger i det 19de Aarhundredes Litteratur*, vol. 5), Copenhagen, 1890 (also in *Samlede Skrifter*, 6, Copenhagen, 1900, 365 ff.); German translation, Leipzig, 1891.

spirituality of the Romantic age disappeared; "emancipation of the flesh," "liberalism," "*esprit*," were the watchwords of the new time, and national character was prized less highly than a successful imitation of French models. The superiority of France, in poetry and art, as in politics, was one of the established convictions of "Young Germany." And in the end, literature was not altogether a loser; it emerged from its subservience to French taste less provincial, broader in its sympathies, and more cosmopolitan. But, as literary reformers, apart from their social and political ideas, the Young German writers failed conspicuously to counterbalance the levelling tendency of Hegelianism, to break the spell of mediocrity that was due to Hegel's influence.

The hopes of a united Germany cherished by the patriots of the Napoleonic wars had been rudely extinguished in 1814, by the establishment of the "Deutsche Bund." Germany lay at the mercy of Prince Metternich. In vain did Ludwig Jahn (1778-1852) and his athletic enthusiasts—gymnastics were by him made to serve patriotic ends—endeavour to uphold the nation's pride under the galling tyranny, while the "Burschenschaften" at the universities were regarded by the Government as little better than revolutionary clubs. The Paris Revolution of 1830 to some extent relieved the pressure, but Germany had still eighteen years to wait for a brighter political epoch. In the mean time, as a direct outcome of the July Revolution, a new literary movement had arisen. Phrases like "Young Germany" were in the air; in Switzerland, a political society, a branch of Mazzini's "la giovine Europa," had adopted the title "Das junge Deutschland," and, in 1833, H. Laube began to write a novel, *Das junge Europa*. A year later, in 1834, Ludolf Wienbarg (1802-72), a Privatdocent in the University of Kiel, published *Ästhetische Feldzüge*, a volume of lectures, the dedication of which opened with the words, "Dir, junges Deutschland, widme ich diese Reden, nicht dem alten." The *Ästhetischen Feldzüge*, without professing to embody the principles of the school, contained the views of an "advanced" thinker of 1834; and the expression "junges Deutschland" is here used for the first time with reference to literature. In the following year, Laube and Gutzkow planned a review in which they proposed to combine the characteristics of the traditional

L. Jahn, 1778-1852.

L. Wienbarg, 1802-72.

literary periodicals with those of the French reviews. The new journal, originally to have been called *Das junge Deutschland*, was ultimately announced as the *Deutsche Revue*. Before, however, the first number was published, the German Bundestag, at the instigation of Austria, issued a decree dated December 10, 1835, ordering the suppression of the "Schriften aus der unter dem Namen des jungen Deutschlands bekannten litterarischen Schule, zu welcher namentlich Heinrich Heine, Karl Gutzkow, Ludolf Wienbarg, Theodor Mundt und Heinrich Laube gehören"; and thus it might be said that the name, even the very existence, of the school now known as "Young Germany" was the consequence of a decree intended for its suppression. But the two oldest members of the group, Ludwig Börne and Heinrich Heine, were both famous before the July Revolution.

Ludwig Börne, 1786-1837.

Ludwig Börne,[1] or Löb Baruch, for the former name was only assumed after his conversion to Christianity (1818), was born in the Frankfort Ghetto in 1786, and died at Paris in 1837. His father sent him to study medicine at the University of Berlin, and here he fell in love with Henriette Herz, who was more than twenty years his senior. In 1807, he exchanged medicine for more congenial political studies at Heidelberg and Giessen, and, four years later, received an official position in his native town. After Napoleon's fall and the re-establishment of Frankfort as a free city, Börne was obliged, as a Jew, to resign his post. He turned to journalism, but his various periodicals—the best of them was *Die Waage* (1818-21)—brought him into constant conflict with the police. In 1830, he made Paris his home, and from here wrote, originally as private letters to his friend Jeannette Wohl, the brilliant *Briefe aus Paris* (1830-33). On their publication, they were suppressed by the Bundestag, a step which helped to make them the most popular book of the day. Börne's *Briefe aus Paris* are at a disadvantage in so far as they are merely documents of their time; under the guise of reports from Paris, they are glowing pleas for reform at home, determined attempts to make Germany ashamed of the condition of slavery to which her rulers had reduced her. They are, however, strangely unbalanced:

Briefe aus Paris, 1830-33.

[1] The latest edition of Börne's *Gesammelte Schriften*, 6 vols., Leipzig, 1900. Cp. M. Holzmann, *L. Börne, sein Leben und Wirken*, Berlin, 1888.

optimistic and sanguinary as long as there is hope for the cause of freedom and revolution, depressed at every defeat which the cause has to sustain. On the whole, they are excellent examples of journalistic writing: Börne's easy style was not only much superior to the lumbering prose in which the newspaper of his time was written, but was also an advance on the lengthy periods of even eminent men of letters. Thus, irrespective of their contents, the *Briefe aus Paris* mark a stage in the evolution of German prose.

As a critic of literature, Börne's opinions were almost invariably subordinate to his political and social standpoint. For Jean Paul Richter, for instance, he had unbounded admiration, but what really appealed to his democratic heart was the older writer's sympathy for the poor and oppressed. He imitated Jean Paul in a witty, superficial way in his own satires and short stories, the most familiar of which are the *Monographie der deutschen Postschnecke* (1821), *Der Narr im weissen Schwan*, and *Der Esskünstler* (1822); but his imagination had little of the Romantic delicacy which characterised Richter's. Börne was also the leader of a crusade against Goethe's sovereignty in German literature, to which he was impelled less by the poet's work than by his aristocratic nature; the respect which Goethe, in common with most writers of the eighteenth century, had for princes, was distasteful to the journalist who assisted at the July Revolution.

Short stories.

By far the most gifted of the writers who belonged to, or at least for a part of their lives were associated with, "Young Germany," is Heinrich Heine.[1] The ties that bound Heine to the school were not, however, so close as in Börne's case. In his lyric poetry, Heine drew his inspiration from the Romanticists, and was able to share the feelings of the latter towards Goethe — although a time came when he attacked the movement to which he nominally belonged, with a mockery and bitterness of which Heine alone was capable. He sympathised—that is to say, one side of his Protean nature sympathised—with the Young German antagonism to

Heinrich Heine, 1797-1856.

[1] Editions of Heine's works by G. Karpeles, 9 vols., 2nd ed., Berlin, 1893, and E. Elster, 7 vols., Leipzig, 1887-90. Of literature on Heine the most noteworthy books are A. Strodtmann, *Heinrich Heines Leben und Werke*, 2 vols., 3rd ed., Berlin, 1884; W. Bölsche, *Heinrich Heine; Versuch einer ästhetisch-kritischen Analyse seiner Werke*, Leipzig, 1887, and J. Legras, *Henri Heine poète*, Paris, 1897.

the "Romantik," and he agreed heart and soul with them when they pointed to France as the Promised Land, and to Paris as the New Jerusalem.

Heinrich, or more correctly Harry Heine, was a native of Düsseldorf, where he was born on the 13th of December, 1797. After more than one unsuccessful attempt to establish him in business, Salomon Heine, a wealthy uncle in Hamburg, consented to him matriculating at the University of Bonn as a student of law. Law had as little attraction for Heine as commerce, but in Bonn he had the opportunity of hearing lectures by A. W. Schlegel. He spent his second term at the University of Göttingen, from which he was expelled for his share in a duel. Thereupon he went to Berlin, where he had access to the salon of Rahel Varnhagen, and where, in 1822, he published his first volume of *Gedichte;* also, about this time, he completed two tragedies, *Almansor* and *William Ratcliff* (1823), which, like the early poems, relate his own "junge Leiden." But none of these works attracted much attention. For four years Heine cherished an unrequited passion for one of his cousins, a daughter of Salomon Heine; in 1823, however, when at Cuxhaven, he fell in love with her younger sister. In the following year he returned to Göttingen, and in the autumn made an excursion through the Harz Mountains, the account of which occupies half the first part of the *Reisebilder*. In 1825, Heine turned Christian, and, a few weeks later, graduated from Göttingen as Doctor of Law. With the *Harzreise* (1826) he became famous, and the *Buch der Lieder* (1827) made him at one stroke the most popular poet in Germany. The second part of the *Reisebilder* (containing, besides a continuation of *Die Nordsee*, *Das Buch le Grand*) was published in 1827; the third, descriptive of his journey to the Baths of Lucca, three years later; while the fourth volume is taken up partly with an account of *Die Stadt Lucca* and partly with *Englische Fragmente* (1831), being Heine's impressions of a journey to England in 1827.

In Bonn, Göttingen, and Berlin.

Die Harzreise, 1826.

Buch der Lieder, 1827.

From 1831 on, Paris was Heine's home, where he was mainly occupied as correspondent for German newspapers (*Französische Zustände*, 1833; *Der Salon*, 1835-40; *Lutetia*, 1854). His warm sympathies for France and his satirical attacks on Germany commended him not only to the "Young

In Paris.

German" party, but also to the French Government, from which, between 1836 and 1848, he received a pension. He never, however, ceased to love Germany with a Romantic affection:—

> "O, Deutschland, meine ferne Liebe,
> Gedenk' ich deiner, wein' ich fast!
> Das muntre Frankreich scheint mir trübe,
> Das leichte Volk wird mir zur Last."[1]

In the winter of 1834-35, Heine made the acquaintance of Eugénie Mirat ("Mathilde"), who, after being his faithful comrade for six years, became his wife. Neither *Die Romantische Schule* (1836) nor his attack on Börne, *Ludwig Börne* (1840), places the poet in a favourable light, but in 1844, as the result of a visit to Germany, he published an admirable satire, *Deutschland, ein Wintermärchen*, and a volume of *Neue Gedichte*, the first since the *Buch der Lieder*.

Atta Troll, 1847.

Atta Troll, ein Sommermärchen (1847), the hero of which is a dancing-bear in the Pyrenean village of Cauterets, is, on the whole, Heine's most sustained poem. The slight fable of *Atta Troll*—the bear escapes from its keeper and takes refuge in the famous Vale of Roncevaux, where it is ultimately shot—is only the framework for an attack on the political poetry which, about 1840, began to spread over Germany. But keen as was the lash of Heine's satire, the magic beauty with which he decked out the Romantic scenery of Roncevaux was still more effectual in making the "leathern" verse of the time ridiculous. *Atta Troll* is, as the poet himself said of it, "das letzte freie Waldlied der Romantik." On January 3, 1846, he wrote to Varnhagen von Ense—

> "Das tausendjährige Reich der Romantik hat ein Ende, und ich selber war sein letzter und abgedankter Fabelkönig. Hätte ich nicht die Krone vom Haupte fortgeschmissen und den Kittel angezogen, sie hätten mich richtig geköpft. Vor vier Jahren hatte ich, ehe ich abtrünnig wurde von mir selber, noch ein Gelüste, mit den alten Traumgenossen mich herumzutummeln im Mondschein—und ich schrieb den 'Atta Troll,' den Schwanengesang der untergehenden Periode, und Ihnen habe ich ihn gewidmet."[2]

Romancero, 1851.

The fine romances and pessimistic lyrics forming the *Romancero* were published in 1851, and the *Letzten Gedichte*

[1] E. Elster's edition, 1, 272.
[2] *Briefe*, 2 (G. Karpeles' edition, 9), 324. Cp. the close of *Atta Troll* (*Werke*, 2, 420).

in 1853 and 1855. In 1848, Heine was struck down by a disease of the spine, which condemned him for eight years to a "Matratzengruft." He died on the 17th of February, 1856. A gleam of light in his last years was his love for Camille Selden—her real name was Elise von Krienitz—the faithful "Mouche," who nursed him in the final stage of his illness.

Heine as lyric poet.

Heinrich Heine is the most cosmopolitan poet of Germany. With remarkable unanimity, the nations of Europe, and especially the Latin nations, have made themselves his champions, maintaining with a persistence which his own countrymen often find it difficult to understand, that among German poets he is second to Goethe only. No lyric poet has been so widely read in all lands as Heine, no German book of the century has exerted so enduring an influence as the *Buch der Lieder*. The fact is that Heine, as none of his predecessors, made the German lyric European; he stripped it of many of its exclusively national qualities. In place, for instance, of that vague spirituality peculiar to German song, we find in his poems—in those at least of the *Buch der Lieder*—a bold imagery, which all nationalities are able to appreciate. Heine had the power of giving concrete and definite expression to the most subtle feelings; delicate "Stimmungen" he clothed in startling metaphors which, in the poems of the first period, almost jar upon the reader. The lyric beauty of verses like *Was will die einsame Thräne?* or—

> "Aus meinen Thränen spriessen
> Viel blühende Blumen hervor,
> Und meine Seufzer werden
> Ein Nachtigallenchor";

or—in a less degree—of

> "Ein Fichtenbaum steht einsam
> Im Norden auf kahler Höh'.
> Ihn schläfert; mit weisser Decke
> Umhüllen ihn Eis und Schnee.
>
> Er träumt von einer Palme,
> Die fern im Morgenland
> Einsam und schweigend trauert
> Auf brennender Felsenwand,"[1]

[1] E. Elster's edition, 1, 66, 78, and 108. Cp. G. Brandes, *Det unge Tyskland* (*Samlede Skrifter*, 6), 446 ff.

recalls not the national German "Lied," but the *Song of Songs:* in other words, Heine, like his contemporary, Rückert, introduced into the Romantic lyric a note of orientalism. While, however, in Rückert, this exotic element was easily recognised, it was combined in Heine's case with traditional German elements. Heine's oriental exaggeration and materialisation, combined with the irony which he was always ready to pour on his own Romanticism, were new and strange, and they appealed with the same irresistible force to his contemporaries as the Byronic "Weltschmerz" had appealed to a decade earlier. But, nevertheless, in the evolution of the German lyric, Heine struck an insincere note, which may be sought in vain in Walther von der Vogelweide, Goethe, Eichendorff, or the nameless poets of the Volkslied.

Later lyrics.

As Heine grew older a change came over his poetry; the scoffing and extravagant tone of so many of the lyrics in the *Buch der Lieder* gradually disappeared. During his years of suffering in Paris, life became terribly earnest, and the passion with which it closed was very different from that of his *Junge Leiden.* The feelings expressed in the verses of Heine's last period were too intense to admit of satirical witticisms. No poet was ever more sincere than he, when he wrote *Die Wahlverlobten:*—

> "Ich weiss es jetzt. Bei Gott! du bist es,
> Die ich geliebt. Wie bitter ist es,
> Wenn im Momente des Erkennens
> Die Stunde schlägt des ew'gen Trennens!
> Der Willkomm ist zu gleicher Zeit
> Ein Lebewohl! Wir scheiden heut'
> Auf immerdar. Kein Wiedersehn
> Gibt es für uns in Himmelshöhn"[1]—

or that mystic, Romantic epithalamium, composed a few weeks before his death, in which he dreams of himself lying dead in a marble sarcophagus, and of his "Mouche" as a passion-flower above his head.

Ballads.

In objective poetry, where, above all, visual power is demanded, Heine was a master. Volkslieder such as the *Loreley*, in which he gave final form to Brentano's poem; ballads, such as *Die Grenadiere* (written in 1819), *Belsazer*, *Die Wallfahrt nach Kevlaar*, and *Das Schlachtfeld von Hast-*

[1] E. Elster's edition, 2, 45.

ings, are worthy of a place beside the best of Schiller's or Uhland's. The entire poetry which sprang up round Napoleon pales before the simple intensity of Heine's verses—

"Nach Frankreich zogen zwei Grenadier',
Die waren in Russland gefangen.
Und als sie kamen ins deutsche Quartier,
Sie liessen die Köpfe hangen.

Da hörten sie beide die traurige Mär':
Dass Frankreich verloren gegangen,
Besiegt und zerschlagen das grosse Heer,—
Und der Kaiser, der Kaiser gefangen.

Da weinten zusammen die Grenadier'
Wohl ob der kläglichen Kunde.
Der eine sprach: Wie weh wird mir,
Wie brennt meine alte Wunde!

Der andre sprach: Das Lied ist aus,
Auch ich möcht' mit dir sterben,
Doch hab' ich Weib und Kind zu Haus,
Die ohne mich verderben.

Was schert mich Weib, was schert mich Kind!
Ich trage weit bessres Verlangen;
Lass sie betteln gehn, wenn sie hungrig sind,—
Mein Kaiser, mein Kaiser gefangen!"[1]

Sea-poetry.

There is still another side to Heine's poetry in which he had no rival among German poets, his understanding for the sea. He is almost the only German writer who has expressed that fervid delight in the ocean, which echoes through the poetry of Greece, Scandinavia, and England. Heine loved the fresh salt air, the curling waves, and the long sandy beaches of the North Sea coasts as intensely as Eichendorff loved the forest; and nothing he wrote surpassed in beauty of expression his full-sounding lyrics of *Die Nordsee*:—

"Thalatta! Thalatta!
Sei mir gegrüsst, du ewiges Meer!
Sei mir gegrüsst zehntausendmal
Aus jauchzendem Herzen,
Wie einst dich begrüssten
Zehntausend Griechenherzen,
Unglückbekämpfende, heimatverlangende,
Weltberühmte Griechenherzen."[2]

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[1] E. Elster's edition, 1, 39 f.

[2] *Ibid.*, 1, 179.

As a prose writer, Heine exerted a hardly less abiding influence than as a poet. His style, it is true, is often unbalanced and tastelessly flippant; Romantic "Schwärmerei" and wit jostle each other in the same paragraph, but his prose is always clear and concrete; his touch is never heavy, nor are his sentences unwieldy. The light tone of the *Reisebilder* or *Salon* was better adapted for the ideas which the Young German School had to express than the classic prose of Goethe or Schopenhauer. The harshest accusation that can be brought against Heine is that his satire was misplaced, his wit cynical and even gross; many a matchless song is ruined by a gratuitous gibe; his scoffing at Christianity is in bad taste; and his personal attacks on men like Schlegel, at whose feet he had sat, or on Börne, who had been his friend, are beyond all defence. But at the same time it must be recognised that Heine, as few other German writers, had at his command an Aristophanic wealth of satire and cynicism, which only expressed itself in petty personalities for want of worthier objects: Heine suffered by living in an age when there were no great causes to fight for. And, after all, he was a fighter; it was no vainglorious boast when he called himself "a soldier in the Liberation War of Humanity":—

Heine's cynicism.

> "Ich weiss wirklich nicht, ob ich es verdiene, dass man mir einst mit einem Lorbeerkranze den Sarg verziere. Die Poesie, wie sehr ich sie auch liebte, war mir immer nur heiliges Spielzeug oder geweihtes Mittel für himmlische Zwecke. Ich habe nie grossen Werth gelegt auf Dichterruhm, und ob man meine Lieder preiset oder tadelt, es kümmert mich wenig. Aber ein Schwert sollt ihr mir auf den Sarg legen; denn ich war ein braver Soldat im Befreiungskriege der Menschheit."[1]

This "spirituel Allemand," as the French called him, had a great soul; he combined the art of the lyric poet with the reforming zeal of a Hebrew prophet. It was the irony of Heine's fate that his opportunity never came.

The reputation of none of the Young German writers has faded more rapidly than that of Karl F. Gutzkow,[2] who, for at least twenty years of his life, was the most influential writer in Germany. Born in 1811, Gutzkow was brought

Karl Gutzkow, 1811-78.

[1] *Reisebilder*, 3, Kap. 31 (*Werke*, 3, 281).
[2] *Gesammelte Werke* (novels, &c.), 12 vols., Jena, 1873-78.

up with a view to a clerical career, but the July Revolution sweeping away all such plans, he became a journalist. An ironical romance, *Maha Guru, Geschichte eines Gottes* (1833), attracted a little attention, and, in 1835, appeared *Wally, die Zweiflerin*, a book which not only excited violent indignation in its day, but even cost its author three months' imprisonment. Besides being tinged by the religious scepticism which found its most characteristic expression in the *Leben Jesu* (1835) by David F. Strauss, this novel was what the critics of the School called a "glorification of the flesh," and it scintillated with that superficial wittiness which, ever since, has been a disagreeable element in German fiction.

Wally die Zweiflerin, 1835.

Gutzkow's next novel, *Seraphine* (1837), into which he wove a love affair of his own, did not meet with much favour, but *Blasedow und seine Söhne* (1838), an educational story in a humorous and satirical vein, was an advance on anything he had yet written. In fact, Gutzkow's reputation rests almost exclusively on books published after the Revolution of 1848. Of these, *Die Ritter vom Geiste* (1850-52), in nine volumes, was a starting-point for the modern social novel in Germany, and the immediate forerunner of F. Spielhagen's *Problematische Naturen*. To some extent *Die Ritter vom Geiste* anticipates the literary principles of the later French naturalists, Gutzkow's object here being, in the first instance, to paint a *milieu* rather than to narrate events.

Die Ritter vom Geiste, 1850.

"Ich glaube," he says in his preface to the novel, "dass der Roman eine neue Phase erlebt. Er soll in der That mehr werden, als der Roman von früher gewesen. Der Roman von früher, ich spreche nicht verachtend, sondern bewundernd, stellte das Nacheinander kunstvoll verschlungener Begebenheiten dar. . . . Der neue Roman ist der Roman des Nebeneinander. Da liegt die ganze Welt! Da begegnen sich Könige und Bettler! Die Menschen, die zu einer erzählten Geschichte gehören, und die, die ihr eine widerstrahlte Beleuchtung geben. . . . Nun fällt die Willkür der Erfindung fort. Kein Abschnitt des Lebens mehr, der ganze, runde, volle Kreis liegt vor uns."[1]

In practice, however, Gutzkow fell short of the ideal he set up for himself in this preface. *Die Ritter vom Geiste* aimed at depicting the reactionary period that followed the Revolution, but Gutzkow's picture is confused. The fundamental idea of the "Knights of the Spirit" who were to

[1] *Vorwort zur ersten Auflage*, ix.

oppose the misuse of political power was characteristic of the age, and a symptom of the intellectual tendency that gave rise to Freiligrath's famous *mot*, "Deutschland ist Hamlet."[1] But the plot underlying the nine volumes of "Nebeneinander" is sensational and trivial, and recalls the "family" novels which had flooded the book-market from previous to the "Sturm und Drang" until the close of the eighteenth century. *Die Ritter vom Geiste* was followed by *Der Zauberer von Rom* (1858-61), a romance of German Catholicism. This, however, and Gutzkow's remaining novels, *Hohenschwangau* (1867-68), *Die Söhne Pestalozzis* (1870), *Die neuen Serapionsbrüder* (1877), show a steady decline of power; moreover, the movement in German fiction which *Die Ritter vom Geiste* inaugurated, and to which we shall return in a later chapter, advanced too rapidly for Gutzkow, and he was soon left far behind.

Other novels.

As dramatist.

Although Gutzkow owed his position in literary history mainly to the fact that he was a pioneer of modern methods of writing fiction, his popularity as a playwright has been more durable.[2] After some failures, *Richard Savage*, a tragedy, met with success in 1838; and this was the first of a long series of plays which, although deficient in finer poetic qualities, are well constructed, and written in an effective and not unliterary style; several of them are still in the repertory of all German theatres. *Zopf und Schwert* (1843), which takes the chief place, is a historical comedy of intrigue, on the lines made popular by Eugène Scribe; Friedrich Wilhelm I. of Prussia and the members of his "Tabakscollegium" are drawn with admirable humour, and the historical colour, without being particularly true, is utilised to heighten the effect. So much can hardly be said of Gutzkow's last important drama, *Der Königslieutenant*, which was written in celebration of Goethe's hundredth birthday (1849). The subject of the play is taken from the third book of *Dichtung und Wahrheit*, where Goethe describes how the "Königslieutenant" Thorane (properly Thoranc) was quartered in his father's house at Frankfort. The local artists whom Thorane gathers round him are described with some skill, but the French count himself is

Zopf und Schwert, 1843.

Der Königslieutenant, 1849.

[1] Freiligrath's *Gesammelte Dichtungen*, 3, 83.
[2] *Dramatische Werke*, 20 vols., Jena, 1871-72.

merely a theatrical figure, and the boy Goethe is idealised with a complete disregard for facts. The same indifference to actuality is to be seen in the clever comedy, *Das Urbild des Tartüffe* (1847), founded on an incident in Molière's life. Lastly, mention has to be made of Gutzkow's only successful effort at a higher form of drama, *Uriel Acosta* (1847), in which the martyrdom of Spinoza's forerunner is made the basis of a flaming plea for "Gedankenfreiheit." The play is in iambics and excellently written, but the standpoint and spirit of the conflict are too exclusively those of Strauss and his school for the work to have any historical value. Gutzkow's death took place in 1878, as the result of an accident: an overturned candle set fire to his bed.

Uriel Acosta, 1847.

Heinrich Laube[1] (1806-84), the last of the leaders of "Young Germany," and five years older than Gutzkow, was a Silesian, who came from a poor and provincial home and fought his way to the front. At the university, Laube devoted more time to duelling and social life than to study; but the theatre attracted him strongly, and his tentative beginnings as dramatist and critic met with encouragement. In 1832 and 1833, he published two volumes of essays entitled *Das neue Jahrhundert*, which were followed by the first of an ambitiously planned series of novels, *Das junge Europa*. This book, which bore the separate title *Die Poeten* (1833), is a "Tendenzroman" in letters, and discusses the advanced ideas of the author's time; but the story is only a succession of gallant adventures. The remaining parts of the work, *Die Krieger*, in which the Polish Revolution occupies the foreground, and *Die Bürger*, were not published until 1837. Between 1834 and 1837, Laube wrote six volumes of *Reisenovellen*, an attempt to carry out on a larger scale the kind of writing Heine had made popular in the *Reisebilder*. Laube's chief work of fiction was *Der deutsche Krieg*, a cycle of no less than nine volumes (1865-66), depicting with undeniable grandeur of a realistic nature, the stormy epoch of the Thirty Years' War. In *Die Böhminger* (1880), his last novel, he endeavoured to call up the age in which his own youth was passed, and the interest of the book depends mainly on the freshness of the author's reminiscences.

H. Laube, 1806-84.

Das junge Europa, 1833-37.

Der deutsche Krieg, 1865-66.

[1] *Gesammelte Schriften*, 16 vols., Vienna, 1875-82; *Dramatische Werke*, 12 vols., Vienna, 1880-92.

To Laube, as to all writers of that time, Paris was an irresistible centre of attraction; but he was not able to visit it until 1839. His residence in France was of special importance to his subsequent work as playwright and theatre-director. On the first of January, 1850, he entered upon his duties as artistic manager of the Burgtheater of Vienna, and with this appointment reached the goal of his ambition. He remained in Vienna until 1867; a couple of years later, he undertook the direction of the Municipal theatres in Leipzig, but in 1871, was again in Vienna, this time at the head of the new "Wiener Stadttheater." His books on the theatre (*Das Burgtheater*, 1868; *Das norddeutsche Theater*, 1872; *Das Wiener Stadttheater*, 1875) are valuable contributions to modern dramaturgic literature.

Laube as theatre director.

His plays.

As a playwright, Laube rivalled Gutzkow, and even his first dramatic attempts—such as the unpublished tragedy, *Gustav Adolf* (1829)—revealed an instinctive knowledge of stage-requirements. *Mondaleschi* (1839) was a drama of promise, but his name did not become known before the production of *Struensee* (1847), a clever piece in the manner of the French dramatists, to whom he looked up as unsurpassable models. Laube also wrote two "literary" comedies, *Gottsched und Gellert* (1845), and *Die Karlsschüler* (1847), the latter, a play which may still be seen on the German stage. The subject of *Die Karlsschüler* is Schiller's flight from the Karlsschule in Stuttgart, and the author took advantage of the opportunity to express the political sentiments of his School. The piece is theatrically effective, but full of a vague pathos, which has aged more rapidly than the *bourgeois* humour of Gutzkow's drama on Goethe's childhood. Laube's ablest drama is *Graf Essex* (1856), in which Queen Elizabeth's favourite is drawn with real psychological insight. The construction of this work is solid and regular, but it is in verse, and verse was not Laube's strong point; he could be declamatory, sententious, epigrammatic, and witty, but he was seldom or never a poet.

Die Karlsschüler, 1847.

Graf Essex, 1856.

T. Mundt, 1808-61.

Of the minor writers associated with the school, little need be said. A. Lewald (1792-1871) and H. Marggraff (1809-64) were no more than journalists, while the wit of M. G. Saphir (1795-1858), a Hungarian Jew, illustrates to what depths could sink the brilliancy of a Börne and Heine.

Theodor Mundt (1808-61), who was mentioned in the decree against the School, was Professor and University Librarian in Berlin, and remained practically the man of one book, *Madonna, Unterhaltungen mit einer Heiligen* (1835), which, on its appearance, created an extraordinary stir. This was partly due to the *doctrinaire* fashion in which Mundt championed the "Kinder der Welt" against the "Kinder Gottes," and set forth the Young German ideas on emancipation of the senses, but also because the book was associated with an incident much discussed in the capital. A Berlin teacher, Heinrich Stieglitz (1801-49), who had published four volumes of indifferent poetry (*Bilder des Orients*, 1831-33), believed that he was born to great things, and, towards the end of 1834, his wife, Charlotte, killed herself, in the hope that a deep sorrow would awaken her husband's genius. After Charlotte Stieglitz's suicide, Mundt, to whom she was bound by a Platonic friendship, wrote a book about her (*Charlotte Stieglitz, ein Denkmal*, 1835), and it is evident that she also sat for the portrait of his "Madonna." Neither Mundt, however, nor his friend Gustav Kühne (1806-88), the author of numerous stories and sketches, had much talent or distinction.[1] Georg Büchner (1813-37),[2] on the other hand, is still remembered by a powerful drama on the French Revolution, *Dantons Tod*, which was published by Gutzkow in 1835.

Madonna, 1835.

Charlotte Stieglitz.

Between 1830 and 1848, Goethe stood by no means high in his countrymen's favour;[3] his ideas and personality were both distasteful to the Young German School, although only Börne had the courage to attack his reputation. But to disparage Goethe was also a natural consequence of the Hegelian philosophy; in the *Geschichte der deutschen Nationallitteratur* (1835), for instance, by G. G. Gervinus (1805-71), who, himself a disciple of Hegel, constructed his book according to his master's philosophy of history, Goethe is not spoken of with enthusiasm. The most characteristic expression of this antipathy to the poet is to be found in the writings of Wolfgang Menzel (1798-1873), a hot-headed graduate of the patriotic student-clubs, who tilted in stormy wrath, not only against

G. G. Gervinus, 1805-71.

W. Menzel, 1798-1873.

[1] On Mundt and Kühne, cp. E. Pierson, *Gustav Kühne*, Dresden, 1890.
[2] *Sämmtliche Werke*, ed. K. E. Franzos. Frankfurt, 1879.
[3] Cp. V. Hehn, *Gedanken über Goethe*, 4th ed., Berlin, 1900, 156 ff.

Goethe, but against the Young German coterie itself: it was Menzel, in fact, who was chiefly responsible for the decree of 1835. While most of this author's voluminous writings are forgotten, his *Geschichte der Deutschen* (1824) has still some value as an example of the form then taken by German patriotism, and his *Deutsche Litteratur* (1827) is an interesting document of the literary tastes of the age.

But Young Germany's indifference towards Goethe was counterbalanced by the warmth of the Berlin circle, over which Varnhagen von Ense presided. In 1834, the latter had written an appreciative memoir of his gifted wife, *Rahel, ein Buch des Andenkens für ihre Freunde*, and in the following year, Bettina von Arnim (1785-1859),[1] Achim von Arnim's widow, published her first book, *Goethes Briefwechsel mit einem Kinde*. This is one of the most beautiful books of the whole German "Romantik," and an excellent illustration of the unsophisticated Romantic temperament. But enthusiastic adoration alone could not have raised so fine a monument to Goethe's genius; Bettina was herself a poet. A similar delicacy of feeling is to be seen in her book on Karoline von Günderode (1780-1806),[2] *Die Günderode* (1840), the unhappy poetess and friend of Wilhelm von Humboldt, who killed herself in 1806. In a later work, *Dies Buch gehört dem König* (1849), Bettina von Arnim showed how easy it was for the warm-hearted Romanticist to champion those very ideas for which Young Germany was fighting. *Dies Buch gehört dem König* is a political book of liberal ideas; it was wrung from Bettina's sentimental soul by the sufferings of the Silesian weavers, by the oppression of the lower classes, by the rise of industrialism, and the change of social conditions,—and all this, in naïve Romanticism, she lays before the king—he alone is able to help and relieve. Thus Romanticism could, at this late date, be invoked in the service of political and social reform.

Bettina von Arnim, 1785-1859.

Dies Buch gehört dem König, 1849.

From the Revolution of 1830 to that of 1848, German literature was practically dominated by Young Germany; but

[1] *Sämmtliche Werke*, 11 vols., Berlin, 1853. Cp. M. Carriere, *Bettina von Arnim*, Breslau, 1887, and M. Koch in D.N.L., 146, 1, 2 [1891], 441 ff.

[2] Cp. L. Geiger, *Karoline von Günderode und ihre Freunde*, Stuttgart, 1895.

from about 1841 onwards, a change came over the aims and methods of political literature. The vague theorising of writers like Börne yielded to definite revolutionary principles, and the "Ritter vom Geiste," to whom Gutzkow looked for Germany's political regeneration, gave way to blue blouses and red caps.

CHAPTER IX.

THE SWABIAN SCHOOL.

As the reader will have gathered from the preceding chapters, the most natural and enduring expression of the German Romantic spirit was the lyric. The Romantic drama never gained a footing on the national stage, and soon ceased to be more than a literary curiosity; the Romantic novel, although it gave a stimulus to the fiction of the succeeding period, had little value in the eyes of the younger generation; but the lyric remained romantic, even after Romanticism, as a creed, had lost all hold upon the nation; and it found a refuge in South Germany from the storms of the Revolution. The Swabian poets,[1] who have now to be discussed, were virtually the heirs of the "Romantik"; they carried the Romantic traditions across the uninspired period of political journalism, which arose under "Young Germany," and kept the line unbroken between the first leaders of Romanticism and masters like Storm and Keller in the following generation.

J. L. Uhland, 1787-1862.

The acknowledged head of the Romantic circle in Würtemberg was Johann Ludwig Uhland.[2] Born in 1787, at Tübingen, where his father was secretary to the university, Uhland showed, as a boy, unusual talent, and was early sent to the university to be trained as a jurist. The rich stores of poetry which the Heidelberg Romanticists had

[1] Cp. R. Krauss, *Schwäbische Litteraturgeschichte*, 2 vols., Freiburg, 1897-99, 2.

[2] *Gesammelte Werke*, ed. H. Fischer, 6 vols., Stuttgart, 1892; also by L. Fränkel, 2 vols., Leipzig, 1893. A critical edition of the *Gedichte* by E. Schmidt and J. Hartmann, 2 vols., Stuttgart, 1898. Cp. K. Mayer, *L. Uhland, seine Freunde und Zeitgenossen*, 2 vols., Stuttgart, 1867, and H. Fischer, *L. Uhland*, Stuttgart, 1887.

discovered in the songs of the people and in the nation's past proved, however, more attractive than law to the young student. Uhland was a poet before he was twenty, and one or two of his finest poems — *Die Kapelle*, *Des Schäfers Sonntagslied*, *Das Schloss am Meer* — were written as early as 1805. In 1808, he contributed, as we have seen, to the *Zeitung für Einsiedler;* two years previously, he had published poems in a "Musenalmanach." With his poetic interests, Uhland combined a strong taste for the study of German antiquity, and in Paris, where he went in 1810, to complete his legal training, he spent most of his time in the National Library over MSS. of medieval poetry. During his student days in Tübingen, he had made the acquaintance of two poets, who were subsequently to be his fellow-workers—Justinus Kerner and Karl Mayer—and, on his return from Paris to Tübingen, he was welcomed by Gustav Schwab and the group of young writers of whom Schwab was the centre. To the patriotic movement of 1813-14 — Uhland was at this time an assessor in the Ministry of Finance at Stuttgart — he contributed several stirring Lieder, such as *Vorwärts* and *Die Siegesbotschaft.* His radical views, however, rendered his position as Government official an uncomfortable one, and, with a view to acquiring more independence, he became an advocate. In the meantime, he had induced Cotta of Tübingen to publish his collected *Gedichte* (1815), the success of which suggested the possibility of making literature his profession.

Gedichte, 1815.

On the establishment, in 1819, of parliamentary government in Würtemberg — an end for which Uhland worked heart and soul — he began to take an active interest in politics, but his Germanic studies were not neglected. In 1822, he published a *Leben Walthers von der Vogelweide*, and, in 1830, was appointed professor in the university of his native town; three years later, in consequence of political conflicts, he was obliged to resign his chair. The year 1848 naturally awakened great hopes in Uhland; his dream of constitutional liberty seemed at length on the point of being realised. He was a prominent member of the Parliament which held its sittings in the Paulskirche at Frankfort, but after the failure of the political movement he withdrew from public life, and his last years were occupied with those studies

in early German literature[1] to which, throughout his career, he was more faithful than to poetry. He died in Tübingen on the 13th of November, 1862.

Uhland proved the worthy heir of all that was best in the younger Romantic movement, which opened his eyes to the inexhaustible poetry of the "Volk," and taught him to appreciate and love the historic past of his own people. But he was by no means a dreamy, impracticable Romanticist, whose chief thought was to veil the prosaic in poetic mysticism; his political interests are evidence enough to the contrary. He had a singularly clear brain and a deep regard for the realities of life. In this respect it would seem, indeed, as if his work were the beginning of that revolt against Romanticism which "Young Germany" completed, and it is not surprising to find that he was more successful as a ballad-singer than as a poet of feelings and sentiments. His poetry, it is true, contains a few lyric gems, which might have been written by Eichendorff, but it is in his ballads and Volkslieder that he appears a master. Among the finest of his early ballads are *Klein Roland* (1808), *Roland Schildträger* (1811), *König Karls Meerfahrt* (1812), *Des Sängers Fluch* (1814), and the cycle, *Graf Eberhard der Rauschebart* (1815). In the restfulness of these poems, and their perfect sense of fitness, there is something that recalls Goethe's classic art. Unlike his Romantic contemporaries, unlike even Heine, Uhland never obtrudes his own personality upon his poetry: he is essentially, as D. F. Strauss described him, the "Klassiker der Romantik." The most complete idea of his talent is to be gained from *Des Sängers Fluch*, which opens with the full-sounding verses:—

Uhland's ballads.

> "Es stand in alten Zeiten ein Schloss, so hoch und hehr,
> Weit glänzt' es über die Lande bis an das blaue Meer,
> Und rings von duft'gen Gärten ein blüthenreicher Kranz,
> Drin sprangen frische Brunnen in Regenbogenglanz.
>
> Dort sass ein stolzer König, an Land und Siegen reich,
> Er sass auf seinem Throne so finster und so bleich;
> Denn was er sinnt, ist Schrecken, und was er blickt, ist Wuth,
> Und was er spricht, ist Geissel, und was er schreibt, ist Blut."[2]

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[1] *Schriften zur Geschichte der Dichtung und Sage*, 8 vols., Stuttgart, 1861-72

[2] E. Schmidt and J. Hartmann's edition, 1, 306 ff.

As a poet of the Volkslied, Uhland has written a handful of excellent songs, such as *Abschied* ("Was klinget und singet die Strass' herauf?" 1806), *Der gute Kamerad* (1809), *Der Wirthin Töchterlein* (1809) and the fine *Trinklied* ("Wir sind nicht mehr am erstem Glas," 1812), all of which are worthy of being placed beside Heine's *Loreley* or Eichendorff's *Zerbrochenes Ringlein*, as genuine songs of the people. The following is *Der Wirthin Töchterlein*:—

"Es zogen drei Bursche wohl über den Rhein,
Bei einer Frau Wirthin da kehrten sie ein:

'Frau Wirthin, hat Sie gut Bier und Wein?
Wo hat Sie Ihr schönes Töchterlein?'

'Mein Bier und Wein ist frisch und klar.
Mein Töchterlein liegt auf der Todtenbahr.'

Und als sie traten zur Kammer hinein,
Da lag sie in einem schwarzen Schrein.

Der erste, der schlug den Schleier zurück
Und schaute sie an mit traurigem Blick:

'Ach, lebtest du noch, du schöne Maid!
Ich würde dich lieben von dieser Zeit.'

Der zweite deckte den Schleier zu
Und kehrte sich ab und weinte dazu:

'Ach, dass du liegst auf der Todtenbahr'!
Ich hab' dich geliebet so manches Jahr.'

Der dritte hub ihn wieder sogleich
Und küsste sie an den Mund so bleich:

'Dich liebt' ich immer, dich lieb' ich noch heut
Und werde dich lieben in Ewigkeit.'"[1]

As a dramatist, Uhland showed little talent; his imagination seemed incapable of the sustained effort demanded by the drama. In two historical plays, *Ernst Herzog von Schwaben* (1818) and *Ludwig der Bayer* (1819), he made a mistake common to all the Romantic dramatists, of confusing the province of the drama with that of the epic. But, unlike many of his predecessors, Uhland does not allow the lyric element to encroach unduly; and, after all, the most serious defect of his dramas is that they are written

Uhland's dramas

[1] E. Schmidt and J. Hartmann's edition, I, 176.

without knowledge of, and without due consideration for, the technical requirements of the theatre.

Uhland and his Swabian friends were "epigoni," belated followers of the classic and Romantic traditions, rather than pioneers of a new period. The perfection of Uhland's ballad poetry is that of classic ripeness, the result of careful workmanship and calm critical judgment: he is not a reformer, he is never filled with the desire to create new forms of expression or to win new ideas for poetry. Indeed, the only interest which Uhland did not share with his predecessors was that in politics: his *Vaterländische Gedichte* (1816), although now forgotten, were the forerunners of the political poetry of the following generation. For ten years of his life, those between 1819 and 1829, Uhland's poetic genius seemed to lie dormant; then, making a fresh start, he composed the fine ballads, *Bertran de Born* (1829), *Der Waller* (1829), and *Das Glück von Edenhall* (1834). But after this brief Indian summer, he wrote no more; thus his career as a poet was virtually a short one, and poetry, instead of being the main business of his life, was, his first youth over, only an occasional pastime. Yet notwithstanding such restrictions, he towers high above the other Swabians, with the single exception of Eduard Mörike, who was the truest lyric poet of them all.

Vaterländische Gedichte, 1816.

Uhland's immediate comrade in arms was Justinus A. C. Kerner (1786-1862).[1] After many false starts, Kerner resolved to devote himself to medicine; he studied in Tübingen, where he made Uhland's acquaintance, and where he spent more time and thought over literature than over medicine. But, unlike his friend, he did not allow poetry to distract him from his chosen profession. In 1819, he settled in the little Swabian town of Weinsberg, where, in later years, his hospitable house was a goal of pilgrimage for the leading German poets of his time. Kerner's first book, *Reiseschatten: von dem Schattenspieler Lux* (1811), was the result of a visit paid to Berlin, Hamburg, and Vienna; and the Romantic confusion of poetry and prose, seriousness and humour, contained in this work, gives a more complete idea of the poet's genius

J. Kerner, 1786-1862.

[1] *Ausgewählte poetische Werke*, 2 vols., Stuttgart, 1878; also in Reclam's *Universal-Bibliothek*, 3837-3858, Leipzig, 1898. Cp. T. Kerner, *J. Kerners Briefwechsel mit seinen Freunden*, 2 vols., Stuttgart, 1897.

than his verse. The first collection of his *Gedichte* appeared in 1826, a fifth and much enlarged edition (*Lyrische Gedichte*) in 1854. As Kerner grew old, he went blind, and, in 1851, was forced to give up his practice. He died in 1862. Like Uhland, he learned his most valuable lesson from the Volkslied, but his profession brought him into closer touch with the people, and his ballads, although they lack the fine classic polish of Uhland's, are sometimes more genuine Volkslieder. Kerner had a more sensitive poetic temperament than his friend, and Romantic mysticism, not cool objectivity, formed the basis of his talent; often, too, in his lyrics, there is a touch of melancholy which recalls the Austrian poet, Lenau. Although smoothness and clearness of expression are missing in Kerner's writings, these qualities are atoned for by the interesting personal note; he himself had experienced the truth of his own lines on *Poesie*:—

"Poesie ist tiefes Schmerzen,
Und es kommt das echte Lied
Einzig aus dem Menschenherzen,
Das ein tiefes Leid durchglüht.

Doch die höchsten Poesien
Schweigen wie der höchste Schmerz,
Nur wie Geisterschatten ziehen
Stumm sie durch's gebrochne Herz."[1]

Not all Kerner's poetry, however, is elegiac in its tone; the most familiar of all his songs is the *Wanderlied*:—

"Wohlauf! noch getrunken
Den funkelnden Wein!
Ade nun, ihr Lieben!
Geschieden muss seyn.
Ade nun, ihr Berge,
Du väterlich Haus!
Es treibt in die Ferne
Mich mächtig hinaus."[2]

In 1826, Friederike Hauffe, a peasant woman of the neighbouring village of Prevorst, who was a victim to somnambulism, came to Kerner to undergo a magnetic cure, and although he soon found that he could do nothing for her, her mental condition awakened his scientific interest. For

[1] *Lyrische Gedichte*, Stuttgart, 1854, 5.
[2] *Ibid.*, 165.

two and a half years he kept her in his house, observing and recording her mysterious sayings and doings, which form the contents of the strange book, *Die Seherin von Prevorst: Eröffnungen über das innere Leben das Menschen und über das Hereinragen einer Geisterwelt in die unsere* (1829). Throughout his life, Kerner had for the unseen world an almost morbid curiosity, which has left its traces on all his writings.

Die Seherin von Prevorst, 1829.

Another of the circle of friends at the University of Tübingen was Gustav Schwab (1792-1850), a native of Stuttgart. In his character, Schwab was an exception to the group to which he belonged: active and enterprising, he was fond of making new friends, of seeing new faces and visiting new lands; he had something of the North German love of roaming. His literary work, for which his pastoral duties left him ample leisure, was even more varied than Uhland's; he modernised Rollenhagen's *Froschmäuseler* (1819), edited Paul Fleming (1820), translated Lamartine (1826), and wrote *Schillers Leben* (1840), besides several books descriptive of Würtemberg. As a poet, however, he occupies a subordinate position; his verse (*Gedichte*, 1828-29)[1] lacks inspiration, and is often merely rhetorical. Schwab called himself with pride Uhland's pupil, and, had it not been for Uhland, he might never have discovered his poetic talent. One of the few poems by him that is still remembered is the student song, "Bemooster Bursche zieh' ich aus"; and he is especially successful in his Legends, notably the *Legende von den heiligen drei Königen* (1827). But it is characteristic of Schwab's talent that his most widely read books were interpretations of the sagas of his native land (*Deutsche Volksbücher*, 1835) and of Greece (*Die schönsten Sagen des klassischen Alterthums*, 1838-40).[2]

G. Schwab, 1792-1850.

These three writers form the inner circle of the so-called Swabian School. With them are associated a few others who stood in more or less close relations to them. Karl F. H. Mayer (1786-1870) had a reputation for his nature-poetry, but his talent, although genuine, was small, and the verses of Gustav Pfizer (1807-90) are deficient both in spontaneity and lyric feeling. The prodigal son of the Tübingen

K. Mayer, 1786-1870.

G. Pfizer, 1807-90.

[1] Ed. G. Klee, Gütersloh, 1882. Cp. K. Klüpfel, *G. Schwab, sein Leben und Werken*, Leipzig, 1888.

[2] Both works edited by G. Klee, Gütersloh, 1894.

circle was Wilhelm Waiblinger (1804-30),[1] a remarkably gifted writer, who unfortunately was cursed by that lack of balance which brought so many of the Romantic poets to a tragic end. Waiblinger, at least, did not share the provincial, homely tastes of his comrades. He began his career as an enthusiast in the cause of Greece (*Lieder der Griechen*, 1823; *Vier Erzählungen aus der Geschichte des jetzigen Griechenlands*, 1826); and in Rome, which he first visited in 1827, he made a scanty income by writing sketches, short stories, and poetry for German publishers. His health broke down under the strain of his restless life, and he died in 1830. The novels of another Swabian Romanticist, Wilhelm Hauff, have already been mentioned in connection with the general Romantic movement; but Hauff was also a poet, and several of his songs (*Reiters Morgengesang*, *Soldatenliebe*) have become Volkslieder. W. Waiblinger, 1804-30.

Unquestionably the greatest lyric poet that Swabia ever produced was Eduard Mörike,[2] who was born at Ludwigsburg in 1804. Mörike, like his friends, did not make a profession of literature: from 1834 on, he was pastor in Cleversulzbach, a small village in Würtemberg, until, in 1843, he was obliged to resign on account of his health. Eight years later, he was appointed teacher of German literature in the Katharinenstift in Stuttgart, where he remained until 1866. He died in 1875. Mörike was not a voluminous writer—his collected works are contained in four small volumes—but all that he wrote bears the stamp of genius. He was a shy, retiring man, who came little into contact with the world, and his lyric genius unfolded itself, free from all disturbing influences. His *Gedichte*, collected in 1838, contain a handful of poems, such as the cycle *Peregrina* (1824 and later), *Jung Volker* (1826), *Das verlassene Mädchen* (1829), *Agnes* (1831), *Schön-Rohtraut* (1837), *Der Gärtner* (1837), *Soldatenbraut* (1837), *Ein Stündlein wohl vor Tag* (1837), which are numbered among the masterpieces of German lyric poetry. The peculiar charm of these songs is their perfect truth and simplicity. Mörike is never metaphysical or rhetorical; he sings of unsatisfied longing, of lost happiness, with an intensity that is suggested rather than expressed; he was able, E. Mörike, 1804-75.

1 *Gesammelte Werke*, 3rd ed., Pforzheim, 1859.
2 *Gesammelte Schriften*, 4 vols., Stuttgart, 1894. Cp. H. Mayne, *E. Mörike, sein Leben und Dichten*, Stuttgart, 1902.

as few poets since Goethe, to penetrate with reverential delicacy into the secret hopes and longings of the soul. *Das verlassene Mädchen* illustrates these characteristics of Mörike's genius :—

"Früh, wann die Hähne krähn,
Eh' die Sternlein verschwinden,
Muss ich am Herde stehn,
Muss Feuer zünden.

Schön ist der Flammen Schein,
Es springen die Funken ;
Ich schaue so drein,
In Leid versunken.

Plötzlich da kommt es mir,
Treuloser Knabe,
Dass ich die Nacht von dir
Geträumet habe.

Thräne auf Thräne dann
Stürzet hernieder ;
So kommt der Tag heran—
O ging' er wieder !"[1]

As a ballad-writer (*Die schlimme Gret*, 1837 ; *Der Feuerreiter*, 1847 ; *Der Schatten*, 1855), Mörike does not rank so high ; the definite conciseness of Uhland's art was better suited to this form of poetry than the suggestiveness in which Mörike excelled. His "Märchen" in verse, however (*Märchen vom sichern Mann*, 1838), and his *Idylle vom Bodensee* (in seven cantos, 1846), contain a rich and unexpected fund of humour.

Maler Nolten, 1832.

Mörike's most ambitious work is an unfinished novel, *Maler Nolten* (1832), a book full of poetic charm. *Maler Nolten* does not, it must be admitted, conform to the modern conception of a novel ; it is formless, like so many Romantic books ; its plot is fragmentary, and its events are imagined rather than observed. But the characters are drawn with an extraordinary fineness of perception, and with a poet's insight into the springs of human action ; the reader is reminded again and again of the imaginative flights in the early Romantic fiction. An imitation of *Wilhelm Meister* and the novels of the Romanticists, *Maler Nolten* is encumbered with many of the weak elements of its models : its atmosphere, for instance, is provincial, and the modern reader is more wearied than entertained by allegorical

[1] *Gedichte*, 61.

masquerades described at length; but, nevertheless, Mörike's story is a landmark in the development of German fiction, standing, as it does, between the purely Romantic novel and such a work as Gottfried Keller's *Der grüne Heinrich*. In 1839, *Maler Nolten* was followed by a volume of shorter stories, among which was the charming "Novelle," *Lucie Gelmeroth*. A "Märchen," *Das Stuttgarter Hutzelmännlein*, appeared in 1852, and, in 1855, ripest of all Mörike's prose writings, *Mozart auf der Reise nach Prag*, a series of finely delineated episodes. *Novellen*, 1839.

With Mörike it is usual to associate Hermann Kurz (1813-73),[1] who, in his *Gedichte* (1836) and *Dichtungen* (1839), helped to keep alive the poetic traditions of the School. But much of Kurz's time was spent—from circumstance rather than choice—in translating: he made excellent versions of *Orlando Furioso* (1843) and of Gottfried's *Tristan* (1844), the close of which he wrote himself with admirable poetic tact. As a novelist, Kurz was the author of a number of short stories and two excellent historical romances, *Schillers Heimathjahre* (1849) and *Der Sonnenwirth* (1855), the scene of which is laid in Würtemberg during Schiller's youth. H. Kurz, 1813-73.

Swabians, too, although not connected with the School, were the religious poet F. K. von Gerok (1815-90), whose *Palmblätter* (1857) became a household book, David Friedrich Strauss (1818-74), the author of the *Leben Jesu* (1835-36), and Friedrich Theodor Vischer (1807-87). The last mentioned was Professor of Æsthetics in Stuttgart, and, in this field, one of the most influential teachers of his time. His chief philosophic work, *Æsthetik*, appeared between 1847 and 1858, but he is best known to literature as the author of a humorous and satirical novel, *Auch Einer* (1879). Vischer also published a satire on the second part of *Faust* (*Faust, der Tragödie dritter Theil*, 1862), a collection of poems (*Lyrische Gänge*, 1882), and several volumes of criticism (*Kritische Gänge*, 1844-73). All his writings bear the stamp of the rugged humour and straightforward honesty of conviction with which their author faced every problem and difficulty. He was an admirable example of a writer who faithfully endeavoured to realise Goethe's words and live "im Ganzen, Guten, Schönen." F. T. Vischer, 1807-87.

[1] *Gesammelte Werke*, ed. P. Heyse, 10 vols., Stuttgart, 1874-75.

Thus, whatever the poets of the Swabian School might be, they were not innovators; they only completed and perfected what the Heidelberg Romanticists had begun. They were none of them men of strongly marked character or personality, and it would be difficult to point to a group of equally eminent authors in any literature who have regarded their work in such an amateurish spirit. Not one of these men, with the exception of Kurz and the unhappy Waiblinger, had the courage to make poetry his lifework: they were doctors, pastors, professors, librarians; and literature was consigned to their leisure moments. This easy-going groove, into which they all fell, their whole attitude towards literature, occasionally combined as it was with a narrow orthodoxy, set the mark of parochialism upon their work. If ever, as in Uhland's case, they cherished liberal ideas in politics or religion, these were without that hearty, youthful optimism before which alone the world yields. Uhland's character and nature made him the appropriate leader of such a school; he, and not Mörike, gave the movement its general character.

CHAPTER X.

LITERATURE IN AUSTRIA; GRILLPARZER.

In the first half of the nineteenth century, conditions in Austria were unfavourable to the growth of a national literature. While in Weimar, Goethe and Schiller lived under an enlightened government which paid literature and art every respect, the writers of the Austrian capital could hardly rise above the platitudes of ordinary life, without coming into conflict with an autocratic censor. A freer literary development might have been possible had the Austrians, like the Russians of a later date, sought outside their own country the liberty denied them at home; but Austrian literature in the first half of the century was too exclusively Viennese to bear transplanting, and the Austrian poets preferred to suffer in silence. Only one art, that of music, had complete freedom to develop in Vienna at the beginning of the century; here Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827), a native of Bonn, found a congenial home and encouraging patrons; here he composed, between 1800 and 1812, his eight *Symphonies*, followed in 1823-24 by the ninth in D minor—works which laid the foundation of modern instrumental music. In Vienna, too, Franz Schubert (1797-1828), the first master of German song-writing, composed his countless *Lieder*. The strongest proof of the artistic instincts of Austria under Metternich's tyranny is, however, that the drama—the form of literature most exposed to the interference of a censor—should not only have lived, but flourished, and that Vienna should have produced in Franz Grillparzer, the greatest dramatic poet of the nineteenth century.

Austrian literature.

L. van Beethoven, 1770-1827.

Throughout the eighteenth century, as has been pointed out in an earlier chapter, the Austrian drama lagged far

behind the drama in North Germany, and even as late as the last quarter of that century, a Viennese public still listened to the pseudo-classical tragedies of Ayrenhoff, and laughed at harlequinades, hardly more reputable than those which Gottsched had banished from the stage in Leipzig, forty years before. The first attempt to create a serious drama was made by Heinrich Joseph von Collin (1771-1811),[1] who regarded the theatre from Schiller's standpoint. Collin began as a follower of Kotzebue, and although his best works, such as *Regulus*, performed with success in 1801, *Coriolan* (1802), and *Bianca della Porta* (1807), are poetically superior to any plays of Kotzebue's, he never entirely shook off a tendency unduly to emphasise the sentimental. In the general character of his tragedies, Collin aimed at a compromise between Schiller and the ancients, or, more accurately, between Schiller and Ayrenhoff. And what Collin, who was also, it may be noted, the author of a collection of patriotic songs (*Wehrmannslieder*, 1809), achieved for the drama in Austria, Joseph Schreyvogel (1768-1832) did for the theatre. Schreyvogel wrote under the pseudonym of "West," and his *Donna Diana* (1819), a version of Moreto's *El desden con el desden*, is still frequently played; but he is now chiefly remembered as the first successful director of the Hofburgtheater.

H. J. von Collin, 1771-1811.

J. Schreyvogel, 1768-1832.

Franz Grillparzer, 1791-1872.

Franz Grillparzer[2] was born in Vienna, on January 15, 1791; he studied law at the university, and, in 1813, entered the service of the state, ultimately rising to the position of "Archivdirektor," from which he did not retire until 1856. The even course of his life was little interrupted: a journey to Italy in 1819, another to Germany in 1826, when he visited Goethe and had the opportunity of comparing the ideal conditions which prevailed in the little Saxon residence with those in Vienna; a visit to France and England in 1836, and, lastly, one to Greece in 1843—these were the chief events of his career. Before he died, on the 21st of January, 1872, he had had a share of the favour and recognition which, in his most productive years,

[1] *Sämmtliche Werke*, 6 vols., Vienna, 1812-14. Cp. F. Laban, *H. J. von Collin*, Vienna, 1879, and A. Hauffen, *Das Drama der klassischen Periode*, 2, 2 (D.N.L., 139, 2 [1891], 261 ff.

[2] *Sämmtliche Werke*, ed. A. Sauer, 5th ed., 20 vols., Stuttgart, 1892-94. Cp. E. Reich, *Franz Grillparzers Dramen*, Dresden, 1894; A. Ehrhard, *Franz Grillparzer*, Paris, 1900 (German edition by M. Necker, Munich, 1902).

had been denied him. Grillparzer's temperament was not a heroic one; he endured or renounced where a man of a stronger personality would have asserted himself and rebelled; he was deficient in that moral strength with which a poet like Schiller was so richly endowed. Grillparzer's life, in fact, was torn asunder by that conflict of will and circumstance which, in his dramas, he depicts again and again. His disappointments lay heaviest upon him about middle life, and his diaries, published after his death, reveal to what depths of despair he sank in the decade between 1825 and 1835. But in the midst of his misery and suffering, he wrote his finest lyric poetry—poetry which gives him a place beside Lenau among the modern lyric writers of Austria. The group of verse which bears the title *Tristia ex Ponto* (1835) contains the concentrated history of Grillparzer's life during this period; here is the cry for an inspiration that will not come, the bitterness of disappointed hopes, and the mockery of a love that brings no happiness:— Lyric poetry.

"O Trügerin von Anfang, du o Leben!
Ein reiner Jüngling trat ich ein bei dir,
Rein war mein Herz, und rein war all mein Streben,
Du aber zahltest Trug und Täuschung mir dafür."

This is the burden of all the unhappy poet's verses; and for him, as for Lenau, the only solution to the problem of life is a pessimistic renunciation:—

"Eins ist, was altergraue Zeiten lehren
Und lehrt die Sonne, die erst heut getagt:
Des Menschen ew'ges Loos, es heisst Entbehren,
Und kein Besitz, als den du dir versagt."[1]

Between 1807 and 1809, Grillparzer wrote *Blanka von Kastilien*, a long iambic tragedy in the style of *Don Carlos*, but *Die Ahnfrau* was the first of his plays to be performed; it was produced on January 31, 1817, and received by the Viennese public with enthusiasm. *Die Ahnfrau*, in which the poet gave expression to his own "Sturm und Drang," is written in the trochaic metre of Müllner's *Schuld*,[2] and is itself virtually a "fate tragedy"; but it must be said to Grill- *Die Ahnfrau*, 1817.

[1] *Werke*, 1, 227 (*Jugenderinnerungen im Grünen*) and 129 (*Entsagung*).

[2] Cp. J. Minor, *Die Ahnfrau und die Schicksalstragedie* in *Festgabe für R. Heinzel*, Weimar, 1898, 387 ff.; also an article in the *Grillparzer-Jahrbuch*, 9 (1899), 1 ff.

parzer's credit that the ghostly "Ahnfrau," who watches over the house of Borotin, is surrounded with more of the poetry of horror than is to be found in any other work of its class. The most noticeable feature of *Die Ahnfrau*, however, is the skill with which it is built up; certainly no other leading dramatist of the world has begun his career with so little to learn as Grillparzer in the art of dramatic construction. A few months after the production of *Die Ahnfrau*, he completed his second drama, *Sappho* (1818). Goethe's *Iphigenie* and *Tasso* were naturally the models for this play, while the subject would seem to have been suggested to the poet by Madame de Staël's *Corinne* and a forgotten tragedy by F. von Kleist.[1] Here again, the mastery of Grillparzer's *technique* is remarkable, and as striking as the beauty of his verse; out of the simple theme of Sappho's renunciation of Phaon on learning that he loves her young slave, Melitta, Grillparzer has created an impressive tragedy, classic in its proportions, and inspired by an essentially modern ethical idea.

Sappho, 1818.

The reception of *Sappho*, if not as warm as that of *Die Ahnfrau*, was not discouraging, and Grillparzer began his next work, *Das goldene Vliess* (1820), which was planned as a trilogy, with a light heart. But between the beginning and the close of this trilogy, life assumed a different aspect for him; in a fit of insanity, his mother put an end to her life. This was a terrible blow to the poet, who himself was only too prone to melancholy, and, for a time, the work was entirely neglected. While *Der Gastfreund* and *Die Argonauten*, the two first dramas of the trilogy, were written, for the most part, in 1818, the last, *Medea*, was not finished until the beginning of 1820. The idea of the *Goldene Vliess* was possibly suggested to Grillparzer by Gotter's melodrama, *Medea* (1787), which was played in Vienna in 1817, and by Cherubini's opera of the same name (1792); Grillparzer, however, differed from his predecessors in so far as he dramatised the whole story of Jason and Medea, and not merely the momentous scenes of Medea's life.

Das goldene Vliess, 1820.

Der Gastfreund is a brief prologue in which Phryxus, coming with the Golden Fleece to Colchis, meets his death by treachery, at the hands of Medea's father. *Die Argonauten*

[1] Cp. J. Schwering, *F. Grillparzers hellenische Trauerspiele*, Paderborn, 1891, 14 ff.

describes Jason's quest of the stolen Fleece, and culminates in the tragic conflict between Medea's love for Jason and her duty towards her own land and kin. In *Medea*, Grillparzer's genius was first revealed in its true proportions. Wherever Jason turns, he is ridiculed for his barbarian wife; in Corinth he hopes to find a place of refuge. Medea buries the symbols of her magic power, and resolves to subordinate herself to her husband's will. But the curse uttered by the dying Phryxus rests upon the Fleece, and is no less fatal to the Argonauts than was the curse on the "Nibelungenhort" to the possessors of that treasure. The fundamental idea of the trilogy might be expressed in Schiller's words:— *Medea.*

> "Das eben ist der Fluch der bösen That,
> Dass sie fortzeugend Böses muss gebären."[1]

There is no rest for Jason and Medea even in Corinth. Jason spurns the wife he has learned to hate; even her children flee from her. The wild spirit of the barbarian at last breaks forth in Medea; she slays her children and sets the palace of the Corinthian king on fire. In the closing act of the tragedy, she bears the Fleece back to Delphi, and takes eternal leave of Jason in a noble monologue, hardly inferior to the farewell in the *Medea* of Euripides:—

> "Erkennst das Zeichen du, um das du rangst?
> Das dir ein Ruhm war und ein Glück dir schien?
> Was ist der Erde Glück?—Ein Schatten!
> Was ist der Erde Ruhm?—Ein Traum!
> Du Armer! Der von Schatten du geträumt!
> Der Traum ist aus, allein die Nacht noch nicht.
> Ich scheide nun, leb' wohl, mein Gatte!
> Die wir zum Unglück uns gefunden,
> Im Unglück scheiden wir. Leb' wohl!"[2]

Das goldene Vliess is the finest of all dramatic versions of the Greek saga; neither Euripides nor Seneca, neither Corneille nor Klinger, has brought out the poetic significance of Medea's life as clearly as Grillparzer. In many respects, too, *Das goldene Vliess* fulfils the conditions of a trilogy better than its forerunner, *Wallenstein:* for while the latter is, as we have seen, essentially one long drama, introduced by a prologue, the constituent plays of Grillparzer's trilogy are independent

[1] *Die Piccolomini*, Act 5, sc. 1.
[2] *Werke*, 5, 228.

of one another. Indeed, *Das goldene Vliess* is not sufficiently homogeneous in style and character; the romantic elements of *Die Argonauten* harmonise ill with the classic severity of *Medea;* and this want of harmony explains, perhaps, why Grillparzer's work has never succeeded as a trilogy, although, from the first, *Medea* was recognised as a tragedy of the highest order. The suggested comparison with *Wallenstein* brings another feature of *Das goldene Vliess* into prominence, and that is its essentially modern character. Of the naïve enthusiasm of Schiller, there is nothing; like Wagner's *Ring des Nibelungen*, with which it has many points in common, the *Goldene Vliess* is a tragedy of modern pessimism. In style and form, again, it foreshadows the naturalistic literature that arose in France on the decay of Romanticism: Grillparzer describes his *milieu* with a care for detail that is not to be found in Goethe or Schiller, or even Kleist; the characters of his personages are, as it were, determined by their surroundings and expressed in the rhythm of the verses they speak.

The years between 1819 and 1822 were the most active in the poet's life; innumerable plans of new dramas—a cycle of six from Roman history, to be called *Die letzten Römer*, a *Marino Falieri*, a *Herodes und Mariamne* — were sketched out, and, one after the other, thrown aside. Ultimately Grillparzer turned his attention to the historical past of his own land, and wrote the tragedy *König Ottokars Glück und Ende*, which was played in 1825, after a protracted conflict with the Austrian censor. The subject of the drama is King Ottokar of Bohemia's vain struggle against the Hapsburgs; but this is only a cloak for the impressions which had been left on Grillparzer's own mind by the rise and fall of a mightier than Ottokar—Napoleon. In many ways, *König Ottokar* marks a new departure in its author's work; compared with *Sappho* or *Medea*, it presents an extraordinary variety of incidents and of characters: in fact, the historical realism of *König Ottokar* has been detrimental to its success as a national tragedy. The canvas Grillparzer chose was too broad for the fine detail-painting of his picture, and his hero is, in psychological respects, too complicated to dominate the action as, for instance, Shakespeare's kings dominate his English histories. The Hungarian Bankban, the principal

König Ottokars Glück und Ende, 1825.

figure in *Ein treuer Diener seines Herrn* (1828), Grillparzer's second historical drama, is a hero after the poet's own heart; in Bankban, he embodied the idea of self-effacing duty, which had attracted him in Kant's ethics. It was hardly to be expected, however, that an audience would follow the history of such a hero with sympathy or understanding, and consequently the drama is seldom to be seen on the stage. But in *Des Meeres und der Liebe Wellen* (1831) and *Der Traum ein Leben* (1834) Grillparzer produced two masterpieces which belong to the permanent repertory of all German theatres.

Ein treuer Diener seines Herrn, 1828.

Des Meeres und der Liebe Wellen stands in the foremost rank of modern love-tragedies. Once more in this drama, Grillparzer returned to the classic scenery of his earlier works, and this time, took his subject from *Hero and Leander*, a late Greek poem by Musæus. When the play opens, Hero is about to take the vow that binds her for ever, as vestal, to the service of Aphrodite. The solemn festival begins, but, while Hero is pouring incense upon the altar of Hymenæus, her eyes meet those of the kneeling Leander, who, with his friend Naukleros, has gained access to the precincts of the temple. The second act brings Hero and Leander's first meeting in the grove of the temple, and, in the evening, guided by a light in the window, Leander swims the Hellespont and climbs the wall of Hero's prison. Here, in the most beautiful scene Grillparzer has written, Hero awakens to full self-consciousness; subdued, restful, harmonious, this love-scene mirrors, as no other in modern literature, the "edle Einfalt und stille Grösse" of the antique. But suspicion rests on Hero; the passion which has made a woman of her and converted her irresolute lover into a man of action, leads to recklessness. On the following night, Leander again attempts to swim the Hellespont; but while Hero sleeps, a storm extinguishes the guiding light in her window. The waves of the sea triumph over those of love, and Leander's body is washed up on the shore. In a "Totenklage" Hero pours out her grief, then sinks lifeless on the temple steps:—

Des Meeres und der Liebe Wellen, 1831.

"Nie wieder dich zu sehn, im Leben nie!
Der du einhergingst im Gewand der Nacht
Und Licht mir strahltest in die dunkle Seele,
Aufblühen machtest all, was hold und gut,

Du fort von hier an einsam dunkeln Ort,
Und nimmer sieht mein lechzend Aug' dich wieder?
Der Tag wird kommen und die stille Nacht,
Der Lenz, der Herbst, des langen Sommers Freuden,
Du aber nie, Leander, hörst du?—nie!
Nie, nimmer, nimmer, nie!"[1]

Der Traum ein Leben, 1834.

Grillparzer's next drama, *Der Traum ein Leben*, although not finished and played until 1834, was begun as early as 1817. A story by Voltaire, *Le blanc et le noir*, seems to have suggested the plot, and the Romantic setting of the play was borrowed from the Spanish drama. But here, too, as in *König Ottokar*, the overweening ambition of Napoleon found a poetic echo. Rustan is a country lad whose desires and ambitions, like those of Grillparzer's typical hero, outrun his power to realise them. Instigated by Zanga, a negro slave, he resolves to leave his uncle's home and go out into the world to seek his fortune. But night descending, he defers his departure until the morrow. In the night, his wishes pass before him in a dream, which, from this point on, becomes the reality for the spectator. In his dream, Rustan takes credit for saving the life of the King of Samarcand, and kills the man to whom the rescue was really due; he rises rapidly to the highest honours at court, and the king ultimately promises him his daughter in marriage. But his deceit and crime come to light; he is unmasked, and has to flee for his life; ultimately, he plunges into a river to escape his pursuers, and at this critical moment, awakens. The horrors of the nightmare are swept away by the rising sun, which Rustan thus addresses:—

"Sei gegrüsst, du heil'ge Frühe,
Ew'ge Sonne, sel'ges Heut'! . . .
Breit' es aus mit deinen Strahlen,
Senk' es tief in jede Brust:
Eines nur ist Glück hiernieden,
Eins: des Innern stiller Frieden
Und die schuldbefreite Brust!
Und die Grösse ist gefährlich,
Und der Ruhm ein leeres Spiel;
Was er giebt, sind nicht'ge Schatten,
Was er nimmt, es ist zu viel!"[2]

"Des Innern stiller Frieden," the peace of soul that knows neither ambition nor sense of guilt — this was Grill-

[1] *Werke*, 7, 101. [2] Ibid., 7, 214 f.

parzer's ideal in life as in poetry. The nothingness of fame, of happiness and love, is the burden of all his plays; renunciation is to him the noblest form of heroism, contentment the highest virtue.

Three and a half years after *Der Traum ein Leben*, Grillparzer's only comedy, *Weh' dem, der lügt* (1838), was played in Vienna and failed, and this failure cost Austria dear: disheartened and embittered, her greatest dramatic poet made no further attempts to win the applause of the theatre. Long since, it is true, not only Vienna, but every other German-speaking capital, has made ample amends for the fiasco of *Weh' dem, der lügt*, which is now universally recognised as one of the masterpieces of modern comedy; but recognition came too late in Grillparzer's life to tempt him to write again for the stage. Leon, the hero of *Weh' dem, der lügt*, is a cook in the service of Bishop Gregory, and sallies forth from Tours into the land of the barbarian to rescue the bishop's nephew. By the very force of the truth —for his master will not allow him to tell a single lie— he outwits the barbarian and achieves his object, all of which is told with an inimitable verve and humour, and revealed an unsuspected side of the dramatist's genius.

Weh' dem, der lügt, 1838.

Grillparzer wrote three other plays, *Libussa*, *Ein Bruderzwist in Habsburg* and *Die Jüdin von Toledo*, which were not, however, published until after his death (1872), while a beautiful fragment of a Biblical drama, *Esther*, appeared in 1863. The first of these, *Libussa*, is based on the Volksbuch which tells of the mythical foundation of Prague, and is, as a dramatic poem, although not as a play for the stage, one of Grillparzer's best works. *Ein Bruderzwist in Habsburg* is a historical tragedy and *Die Jüdin von Toledo* a brilliant adaptation of Lope de Vega's drama, *Las Pazes de los Reyes y Judia de Toledo;* but of the three, only *Die Jüdin von Toledo* has won a permanent place in the repertory of the national theatre. Grillparzer was also the author of two short stories, *Das Kloster bei Sendomir* (1828) and *Der arme Spielmann* (1848), the latter the delicate study of a musician, written directly from the poet's own heart. As a critic, his most important writings are devoted to the Spanish dramatists (*Studien zum spanischen Theater*), to whom by temperament he was closely allied. How thoroughly he entered into the

Other plays.

spirit of Spanish literature may be seen from his appreciation of Lope de Vega, a poet whom the Romantic critics, in their admiration for Calderon, had unjustly depreciated.[1]

Grillparzer stands alone among the dramatic writers of the century; he had neither contemporaries nor successors who, even in a remote degree, could be compared with him. In popularity, however, he was surpassed by his fellow-countryman, E. F. J. von Münch-Bellinghausen (1806-71), who wrote under the pseudonym of Friedrich Halm.[2] Halm's *Griseldis* (1834), *Der Sohn der Wildnis* (1842) and *Der Fechter von Ravenna* (1854), were once favourite plays in all German theatres, but they have small literary worth. Their success was mainly due to Halm's skill in dramatising the ideas brought into vogue by the Young German School; these plays had an "actual" interest for his contemporaries. But Halm's talent was often theatrical rather than dramatic, and his language and style were sentimental. At the same time, he was a worthier representative of the Austrian drama at the middle of the century than the once popular playwright, S. H. von Mosenthal (1821-77), author of a favourite "Volksschauspiel," *Deborah* (1849).

E. F. J. von Münch-Bellinghausen ("F. Halm"), 1806-71.

A writer of finer, although more limited, talent than Halm was Eduard von Bauernfeld (1802-90), a native of Vienna.[3] Bauernfeld's comedies owe much both to Kotzebue and to French models; they are marred by trivialities, and *bon mots* frequently take the place of ideas; but the characters of the plays are delicately outlined, and the picture given of the higher Austrian society of the author's time is tolerably faithful. Besides familiar pieces like *Die Bekenntnisse* (1834) and *Bürgerlich und Romantisch* (1835), which depend for their attractiveness on their witty dialogue, Bauernfeld wrote, at least, one comedy of the first order, *Aus der Gesellschaft* (1866), a play which may be compared with the best French dramas of the time.

E. von Bauernfeld, 1802-90.

The Viennese "Posse" of the earlier half of the century was similar to the older English pantomime; both had retained the characteristics of the Italian *commedia dell' arte*, from which they were derived, and both were purely popular forms

The Viennese "Posse."

[1] Cp. A. Farinelli, *Grillparzer und Lope de Vega*, Berlin, 1894, 194 ff.
[2] F. Halm's *Werke*, 12 vols., Vienna, 1850-73.
[3] *Gesammelte Schriften*, 10 vols., Vienna, 1871-72. Cp. E. Horner, *Bauernfeld*, Leipzig, 1900.

of entertainment. The humour of the "Posse" was a humour of situation and local allusions, a favourite comic effect being to place the ordinary citizen of Vienna amidst the incongruous surroundings of fairyland. Such was the "Posse" as cultivated by J. A. Gleich (1772-1841), Karl Meisl (1775-1853), J. F. Castelli (1781-1862), and Adolf Bäuerle (1784-1859), and Schikaneder's *Die Zauberflöte* (1790), which inspired Mozart's noblest music, was also, as has been seen, essentially a Viennese "Posse." Between *Die Zauberflöte* and Raimund's first play, *Der Barometermacher auf der Zauberinsel* (1823), however, this class of drama made little progress. Ferdinand Raimund (1790-1836)[1] is an even more tragic figure than Grillparzer in the literary history of Austria. As a favourite comic actor in a suburban theatre, he naturally found little opportunity to develop his genius for the serious drama—and yet no writer ever made such an astounding advance as that from the *Barometermacher* to *Der Bauer als Millionär* (1826), *Der Alpenkönig und der Menschenfeind* (1828), and *Der Verschwender* (1833). But Raimund, not easily satisfied, aspired still higher, and when the fickle public transferred its favour to his younger rival, Johann Nestroy, he sank into a melancholy to which, like Grillparzer, he always had a tendency, and shot himself at the age of forty-six. The value of Raimund's writings does not lie in their wit; it is rather to be sought in scenes such as that of the coming of "Youth" and "Age" to the hero of *Der Bauer als Millionär*, where a poetic idea has to be expressed by a concrete image. *Der Alpenkönig und der Menschenfeind* is Raimund's masterpiece and the best German comedy of its time. The hero of this play, the misanthropic Rappelkopf, is worthy of Molière; and the "Alpenkönig," who, in order to cure him, impersonates him, while Rappelkopf himself looks on, is a very different figure from the fantastic genii which appeared in the "Posse." Another characteristic of Raimund's genius was the affectionate sympathy with which he dwelt upon the life of the "Volk"; their joys and troubles he described with a naïve pathos and a truth to nature, which entitle him to be regarded as a pioneer of the peasant-literature of the next generation.

F. Raimund, 1790-1836.

[1] *Sämmtliche Werke*, ed. by K. Glossy and A. Sauer, 3 vols., 2nd ed., Vienna, 1891. Cp. E. Schmidt, *Charakteristiken*, 1, Berlin, 1886, 381 ff.

J. Nestroy, 1801-62.

A witty and cynical satirist, Johann Nestroy (1801-62),[1] was a complete antithesis to Raimund, who had little reason to take Nestroy's rivalry to heart. Only in a few of his earliest farces, such as *Der böse Geist Lumpacivagabundus oder das liederliche Kleeblatt* (1833), did the latter encroach on the fairy drama which Raimund had done so much to spiritualise. Of all Nestroy's pieces, *Lumpacivagabundus*, it is true, is the most popular and widely known, but his genius is seen to much greater advantage in the later farces, *Das Mädl aus der Vorstadt* (1841), *Einen Jux will er sich machen* (1842), and *Kampl* (1852). Not even in France has the invention of comic situations been combined with such skilful character-drawing as in these plays; Nestroy appears here as one of the most brilliant farce-writers in European literature.

During the first half of the nineteenth century, lyric poetry developed in Austria under the influence of two dominant forces, the Romantic traditions, as represented by the Swabian School, and the political feeling which, between 1830 and 1848, was even more intense in South than in North Germany. But there were also poets who turned a deaf ear to the cry for freedom, and were susceptible only to the first of these influences. Of these, the chief was J. C. von Zedlitz (1790-1862),[2] who, as a dramatist (*Der Stern von Sevilla*, 1830; *Kerker und Krone*, 1834), endeavoured with little success to follow in Grillparzer's footsteps, but as a lyric and ballad poet, revealed an originality which has been somewhat unduly overshadowed by the genius of Grün and Lenau. Zedlitz's most famous work is the *Todtenkränze* (1827),[3] a collection of noble threnodies at the graves of great personalities, Wallenstein and Napoleon, Petrarch and Laura, Tasso and Byron, Romeo and Juliet. The metrical form of these poems is the Italian *canzone*, which Zedlitz handled with dexterity; in this respect, the *Todtenkränze* may be classed with the experiments made by the Romantic School, in adapting German verse to Romance forms. Many of Zedlitz's ballads, such as the famous *Nächtliche Heerschau*, in which

J. C. von Zedlitz, 1790-1862.

[1] *Gesammelte Werke*, ed. V. Chiavacci and L. Ganghofer, 12 vols., Stuttgart, 1890-91.

[2] *Dramatische Werke*, 4 vols., Stuttgart, 1860; *Gedichte*, 6th ed., Stuttgart, 1859.

[3] *Gedichte*, 323 ff.

Napoleon reviews his fallen heroes, are not inferior to Uhland's.

The most vital Austrian poetry of this epoch, however, was political in tendency; its burden was a passionate craving for freedom from the tyranny of the Metternich *régime*. The leading political poet was Graf Anton Alexander von Auersperg, better known by his pseudonym of Anastasius Grün (1806-76).[1] As a lyric poet, Grün is inferior to Zedlitz, and, for a writer of such genius, has contributed surprisingly little to the storehouse of German song. His importance for the development of Austrian literature depends, not on his lyric poetry, of which one collection (*Blätter der Liebe*) appeared in 1830, another (*Gedichte*) in 1837, but on his influence as an agitator. His *Spaziergänge eines Wiener Poeten* (1831), which, on its appearance, was eagerly read by all classes, is a frank declaration of the poet's liberalism, and a challenge to the autocratic oppressors of Austria. The earnestness of Grün's political aims is tempered by a genial humour, akin to that of Uhland, who was clearly his model in *Der letzte Ritter* (1830), a romance of Maximilian I. in the style of the *Nibelungenlied*; occasionally, too, as in *Schutt* (1835), Grün gives rein to a pungent wit that recalls Heine.

A. Grün, 1806-76.

A poet of a very different type from Grün is Nikolaus Lenau,[2] or, with his full name, Nikolaus Franz Niembsch von Strehlenau. Born at Csatad in Hungary in 1802, Lenau passed a checkered and unhappy youth. Owing to the generosity of his grandfather, he was enabled to attend the University of Vienna, but from his studies there he seemed to gain little positive advantage. In 1832, he came into contact with the poets of the Swabian School, and, with their assistance, published his first volume of *Gedichte* (1832). The vivid scenes of a peasant-life new to German literature, which these poems described, the fresh breath they brought from the pustas of Hungary, at once attracted the attention of Lenau's contemporaries. But the tone of melancholy, of religious doubt and pessimistic discontent, which runs through all his work, had already begun to show itself; he sings of

N. Lenau, 1802-50.

[1] *Gesammelte Werke*, ed. L. A. Frankl, 5 vols., Berlin, 1877.

[2] *Sämmtliche Werke*, ed. E. Hepp, 2 vols., Leipzig, 1882, and M. Koch, 2 vols. (D.N.L., 154, 155 [1888]). Cp. A. X. Schurz, *Lenau's Leben*, 2 vols., Stuttgart, 1855, and L. Roustan, *Lenau et son temps*, Paris, 1898.

spring, it is true, but the elegiac mood of the autumn is dearest to him:—

"Trübe Wolken, Herbstesluft,
Einsam wandl' ich meine Strassen,
Welkes Laub, kein Vogel ruft,
Ach, wie stille! wie verlassen!

Todeskühl der Winter naht;
Wo sind, Wälder, eure Wonnen?
Fluren, eurer vollen Saat
Goldne Wellen sind veronnen!

Es ist worden kühl und spät,
Nebel auf der Wiese weidet;
Durch die öden Haine weht
Heimweh;—alles flieht und scheidet."[1]

In America.

Lenau was one of those unhappy natures in which German literature is so rich, natures for whom existence remains an eternal enigma. The freedom which he could not find in Austria, he sought in North America—

"Du neue Welt, du freie Welt,
An deren blüthenreichem Strand
Die Fluth der Tyrannei zerschellt:
Ich grüsse dich, mein Vaterland!"[2]—

and an echo of Chateaubriand's delight in the red man, which may be heard in all European literatures during the first half of the century, is present in poems like *Der Indianerzug*, *Das Blockhaus*, *Niagara*. But the "land of freedom" was a disappointment — "Es ist ein Land voll träumerischem Trug"[3]—and Lenau returned to Europe. For the following ten years, he lived, first in Vienna, then in Würtemberg, and, in 1846, when his life seemed on the point of becoming happier and more hopeful, he suddenly went insane. After spending five years in an asylum, he died in 1850.

Faust, 1836.

Of Lenau's longer works, the first was an epic drama, *Faust* (1836), into which he poured his own doubts, his scepticism and despair. His genius, however, was essentially lyric, and he succeeded indifferently in epic or drama—only in so far as *Faust* is lyric, does it appeal to us. And the same is true of the pessimistic poems, *Savonarola* (1837) and *Die Albigenser* (1842). In these years, the elegiac melancholy of

[1] *Herbstentschluss* (*Werke*, ed. M. Koch, 1, 83).
[2] *Abschied* (*l.c.*, 1, 95).
[3] *Der Urwald* (*l.c.*, 1, 237).

Lenau's first volume of *Gedichte* rapidly gave way to the depressing gloom of the *Neueren Gedichte* (1838, 1840).

Lenau's lyric genius.

The chief influences which are to be traced upon Lenau's poetry are those of Goethe, Eichendorff, and Byron; with Uhland and the Swabians, on the other hand, he had little in common; his own life was too tragic for him to understand the satisfied provincialism of Kerner or Mörike, and the friendly relations in which he stood to the circle did not imply any literary sympathy. No poet of northern Europe, not even Hölderlin, expresses as intensely as Lenau the feeling of "eternal autumn," of unrelieved despair. And it is almost always a tragic despair, rarely that withering cynicism first made fashionable by Byron and imitated by Heine.

> "Lieblos und ohne Gott! der Weg ist schaurig,
> Der Zugwind in den Gassen kalt; und du?
> Die ganze Welt ist zum Verzweifeln traurig."[1]

In other words, Lenau is to northern literatures what his contemporary Leopardi was to the literatures of the south of Europe, the representative poet of pessimism: but with this difference, that while Leopardi expressed a mood, in great measure, personal or—as far as Italian literature was concerned — restricted, Lenau gave voice to a pessimism which has inspired the whole movement of German literature from Grillparzer to Richard Wagner.

In concluding this survey of the prominent writers of Austria before 1848, it may fairly be said that this nation, like Norway during the same period, built up, in these years, a national literature of its own. Grillparzer and Bauernfeld, Raimund and Nestroy, set an Austrian stamp upon the German drama, which was of paramount importance for the subsequent development of dramatic literature; and, at the same time, Lenau, Grün, Zedlitz, and Grillparzer himself, created a national Austrian lyric, which had little in common with that of North or even South Germany. Intensely elegiac and pessimistic, this lyric is the voice of a nation whose fate has always been tragic, and whose literature to-day, as fifty years ago, is overshadowed by inaction and despair.

[1] *Einsamkeit* (*l.c.*, 1, 77).

CHAPTER XI.

THE POLITICAL LYRIC.

NOWHERE in Europe, not even in France itself, did the Revolution of 1848 make a deeper incision into the life of the nation—intellectual, social, political—than in German-speaking lands. To Austria, which it freed from the tyranny of Prince Metternich, the Revolution meant almost as much as that of 1789 to France, and the word "vormärzlich" is still used there in speaking of the period before March, 1848. But a time of revolution is not, and never has been, favourable to literature, and the period between 1840 and 1848 in Germany was no exception to the rule. The literary forerunners of the Revolution, and, of course, to a great extent, the participators in it, were the writers who have been considered under the heading "Young Germany"; but, besides these men, there were a number of poets who sprang, as it were, directly from the revolutionary movement itself.

N. Becker, 1809-45.

To find the origin of the revolutionary lyric, it is necessary to go back as far as 1840. In that year, Nikolaus Becker (1809-45), a poet of limited talents, wrote his famous song *Der deutsche Rhein*, each stanza of which began with the lines:—

> "Sie sollen ihn nicht haben,
> Den freien deutschen Rhein."[1]

And in the same year, a hardly more gifted poet, Max Schneckenburger (1819-49), wrote *Die Wacht am Rhein*, which, thirty years later, became a national song. But Becker was the hero of the day, and his *Rheinlied* called forth a reply from Robert Eduard Prutz (1816-72), a native of Stettin. Prutz gave the feeling against France, which

R. E. Prutz, 1816-72.

[1] *Gedichte*, Cologne, 1841, 216.

Becker had expressed, a higher significance; before the Rhine could be "free," he insisted, Germany must break the fetters of thought and word; her press must be free. Compared with Becker or Schneckenburger, Prutz was a poet of genuine inspiration, and his first collection of *Gedichte* (1841) contains a few admirable ballads; but, on the whole, he remained, like his friend Herwegh, a political poet. Prutz's best-known work was a satirical comedy, *Die politische Wochenstube* (1843), in which he championed the principles of the revolutionary party. But the impossibility of a political Aristophanes in modern Prussia at once became obvious; Prutz was charged with *lèse majesté*, and had it not been for the personal intervention of Friedrich Wilhelm IV., whose ideal of a state did not exclude literature, the poet would have paid severely for his temerity. Prutz was also the author of a series of historical dramas, which mirror the spirit of the time, as do also his now forgotten novels. At a later date, when constitutional reform had ceased to be a burning question, he fulfilled the promise of his early ballads in the love-poetry of *Aus der Heimath* (1858), of *Herbstrosen* (1864), and his *Buch der Liebe* (1869). When, however, political troubles began again in 1866, the demagogue that slumbered in him took arms at once, this time with the consequence of three months' imprisonment. Prutz also wrote, besides other works on literary history, an excellent *Geschichte des deutschen Theaters* (1847).

The year 1841 brought the development of the revolutionary lyric to a critical point; towards the end of this year, in a poem, *Aus Spanien*, Ferdinand Freiligrath wrote the oft-quoted lines—

> "Der Dichter steht auf einer höhern Warte,
> Als auf den Zinnen der Partei!" [1]

to which Georg Herwegh replied in flaming words:—

> "Partei! Partei! Wer sollte sie nicht nehmen,
> Die noch die Mutter aller Siege war?
> Wie mag ein Dichter solch ein Wort verfehmen?
> Ein Wort, das Alles Herrliche gebar?" [2]

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[1] *Gesammelte Dichtungen*, 5th ed., Stuttgart, 1886, 3, 11
[2] *Gedichte eines Lebendigen*, 2, Zurich, 1844, 62.

Herwegh was attacked on every side, Geibel, among others, taking part against him; but the revolutionary spirit triumphed. One after another, these young poets of 1841 were swept from their "höhere Warte" to join in the swelling chorus.

Georg Herwegh, 1817-75.

Herwegh, whose life was as unbalanced as his poetry, was born in Stuttgart in 1817, and early threw up theology for literature. But always tactless, he insulted an officer and was obliged to fly to Switzerland, where he found a publisher for the *Gedichte eines Lebendigen* (1841), of which a second volume appeared in 1844. Like almost all these revolutionary poets, Herwegh's reputation was made overnight. On his return to Germany, after having spent some time in Paris, he was welcomed on every side with enthusiasm; the Prussian king, Friedrich Wilhelm IV., received him in a friendly spirit and expressed the hope that he and the poet would be at least "ehrliche Feinde." When, however, the new journal he had planned was suppressed by the Prussian Government, Herwegh again showed his want of tact by writing to the king in a tone which led to his summary expulsion from Prussia. He returned to Switzerland as a political martyr, and from Switzerland found his way back to Paris. When the Revolution broke out, Herwegh put himself at the head of a band of nearly a thousand men, partly French, partly German, and marched into Baden with the intention of converting Germany into a republic. This practically put an end to his career; the remainder of his life was spent in Paris, Zurich, and Baden-Baden, where he died in 1875. Herwegh possessed in a high degree that rough-and-ready talent for versification which is essential to a successful "Volksdichter," but his poetry was not wholly political, and occasionally he shows a capacity for lyric feeling, which was unusual among the revolutionary poets. Had he been less of an agitator or had he lived in less stormy times, he would have been a truer poet.

H. F. Freiligrath, 1810-76.

The most important member of the political group is undoubtedly Hermann Ferdinand Freiligrath,[1] who was born at Detmold, on June 17, 1810. Freiligrath was intended for a commercial career, and at an early age was removed from school. At seventeen, he was a poet; he fell under

[1] *Gesammelte Dichtungen*, 6 vols., 5th ed., Stuttgart, 1886. Cp. W. Buchner, *F. Freiligrath, ein Dichterleben in Briefen*, 2 vols., Lahr, 1882.

the influence of Byron and Victor Hugo, both of whom he began to translate. His apprenticeship to business was spent at Soest, where the poems which fill the volume of *Gedichte* (1833) were, for the most part, written. Far from being revolutionary, these first poems were essentially Romantic in character and strongly coloured by the specifically French Romanticism which Hugo's lyrics had brought into vogue, —like his immediate predecessors, Freiligrath took refuge from the crassness of reality in the poetry of the East. He succeeded in catching the taste of the public, and awoke to find himself famous.

In 1841, he married and settled in Darmstadt; in 1841, too, Herwegh's bugle-call resounded through Germany. For a time, Freiligrath resisted the new liberal ideas, but not for long. The German "Victor Hugo," as Gutzkow called him, laid down the pension, which had called forth bitter taunts from Herwegh, and, the day of his "Wüsten- und Löwen-Poesie" over, Freiligrath became a poet of the Revolution. In *Ein Flecken am Rhein* (1842), he takes farewell of the "Romantik":— As a poet of the Revolution.

> "Dein Reich ist aus! Ja, ich verhehl' es nicht:
> Ein andrer Geist regiert die Welt als deiner.
> Wir fühlen's Alle, wie er Bahn sich bricht;
> Er pulst im Leben, lodert im Gedicht,
> Er strebt, er ringt—so strebte vor ihm keiner!"

The poet no longer stands "auf einer höheren Warte"; his parole is:—

> "Frei werd' ich stehen
> Für das Volk und mit ihm in der Zeit!
> Mit dem Volke soll der Dichter gehen—
> Also les' ich meinen Schiller heut!"[1]

In 1844, Freiligrath published his political verse under the title *Ein Glaubensbekenntniss*, the immediate consequence of which was that he was obliged to escape to Brussels and afterwards to Switzerland. In 1846 appeared another collection of revolutionary poems, *Ça ira*, and in 1849 and 1850, the two little volumes of *Neuere politische und sociale Gedichte*, which contain Freiligrath's finest poetry, the best, indeed, of the whole revolutionary age. Here is to be found

[1] *Gesammelte Dichtungen*, 3, 19 f. and 32.

the famous poem *Von unten auf!* in which the poet compares the proletariate to the stoker of a Rhine steamer; here, too, he stirs the people to revolt against the tyranny of their rulers, and pleads for the freedom of the press. *Die Todten an die Lebenden*, which appeared in July 1848, resulted in an accusation of *lèse majesté*, from which the poet was acquitted. In 1851, however, he deemed it wiser to return to London, where, in 1846, he had found refuge from the persecution of the German government; and for the next sixteen years he made London his home, returning to that commercial life for which his training had fitted him. The national triumphs of 1871 awakening his patriotism once more, he contributed to the "Kriegslyrik" some stirring songs. The new German Empire was not, it is true, the empire which he and his friends had dreamt of thirty years before, but it was at least a united Germany. He died at Cannstadt in 1876.

Freiligrath's earlier, non-political poetry, in which he calls up the sentiments of the "Romantik," has retained its charm long after his songs of revolution have been forgotten. After all, there is more poetic feeling in a verse like—

"O stilles Leben im Walde!
O grüne Einsamkeit!
O blumenreiche Halde!
Wie weit seid ihr, wie weit!"

than in—

"Die neue Rebellion!
Die ganze Rebellion!
Marsch, Marsch!
Marsch, Marsch!
Marsch—wär's zum Tod!
Und unsre Fahn' ist roth!"[1]

On the other hand, it is in the nature of all political poetry to age rapidly. The rhetorical pathos of poems such as *Die Todten an die Lebenden* is lacking in good taste, and their virulence against the ruling classes is too verbose to be criminal; but they fulfilled the mission for which Freiligrath intended them, and remain the most effective lyrics of their class. A characteristic side of Freiligrath's talent is to be seen in his translations; he had the Romantic power of sinking himself in a foreign poet's individuality and of re-

[1] *Dichtungen*, 1, 116 (*Im Walde*), and 3, 184 (*Reveille*).

producing not merely fine shades of meaning, but also the indefinable spirit of his original. Some of his translations from Hugo and Burns, poets for whom he had an innate sympathy, are still numbered among the best translations in German literature.

A more harmless revolutionary than any of these singers was Franz Dingelstedt (1814-81),[1] author of the *Lieder eines kosmopolitischen Nachtwächters* (1842). To Dingelstedt, however, the revolutionary fever was only a form of "Sturm und Drang," his hatred of crowned heads but a passing phase, and the verses in which he expressed this hatred are deficient in individual character. In later years, as "Hofrat" and literary adviser of the Court Theatre in Stuttgart, and—after the success of his tragedy *Das Haus des Barneveldt* (1850)—as Intendant of the Court Theatre in Munich, Dingelstedt found no difficulty in adapting himself to those circles which he had formerly denounced. In 1857, he exchanged his position in Munich for a similar one in Weimar, where he arranged Shakespeare's "Königsdramen" for representation in an unbroken cycle, an achievement which marked the beginning of a new era in the history of the German stage, and outweighed in importance all his lyrics and sentimental novels. In 1872, Dingelstedt was appointed Laube's successor as Director of the Hofburgtheater.

F. Dingelstedt, 1814-81.

Another poet of this group whose interests were not restricted to politics was August Heinrich Hoffmann (1798-1874), or Hoffmann von Fallersleben, as he called himself after his birthplace, near Lüneburg.[2] Hoffmann devoted himself to literary history and Germanic philology at Bonn, Göttingen, and Leyden. In 1823, he was appointed librarian at Breslau, becoming at the same time "Privatdocent" in the University there. Seven years later, he was made professor, and, in 1840 and 1841, he published two volumes of *Unpolitische Lieder*. The consequences of this publication were disastrous to Hoffmann: he was dismissed from the university, and, from 1843 on, led a wandering, unsettled life, like a Spielmann of the middle ages. Although he was a political poet, he did not, like so many of the group, cease to be inspired when he sang of politics. Even

Hoffmann von Fallersleben, 1798-1874.

[1] *Sämmtliche Werke*, 12 vols., Berlin, 1877.
[2] *Gesammelte Werke*, ed. H. Gerstenberg, 8 vols., Berlin, 1891-93.

Freiligrath was rarely at the same time both poet and agitator, but with Hoffmann it was otherwise; his political songs are genuine "Volkslieder," and not merely revolutionary catchwords. Hoffmann von Fallersleben's art has no great delicacy; he was a maker of Volkslieder, not a refiner of them. Of lyric subjectivity he had little, but perhaps just on this account, it was the easier for him to catch the popular tone: songs like *Abend wird es wieder*, like *Wie könnt' ich dein vergessen* and *Deutschland, Deutschland, über Alles*, the last-mentioned written in 1841, have become the common property of the nation.

Several of the revolutionary poets were Austrians. Men like Beck and Hartmann, or the Bohemian Meissner, stand, however, in closer affinity to the German political singers than to the older Austrian poets, of whom the chief representative, as we have seen, was Anastasius Grün. Karl Beck (1817-79), a Hungarian Jew, began to write under the auspices of "Young Germany," and, for a short time, stood high in favour; the theatrical effects and noisy political enthusiasm of his *Gepanzerte Lieder* (1838) appealed exactly to the taste of the time. His *Lieder vom armen Mann* (1846) gave a social-democratic turn to political poetry, by emphasising the gulf between rich and poor. But no very fastidious talent was necessary to make a popular political singer, and Beck was certainly not the least gifted of the group. So far as he is now remembered at all, it is by his sympathetic pictures of Hungarian life in poems such as *Janko, der ungarische Rosshirt* (1841), a kind of novel in verse, or in the idyllic *Stillen Lieder* (1839). Moritz Hartmann (1821-72),[1] also a Jew, was an author whose word carried more weight. He, too, began by writing political verse, *Kelch und Schwert* (1845), and *Reimchronik des Pfaffen Maurizius* (1849), the latter, his best-known work, being a satire on the Frankfort Parliament of 1848. Hartmann's main importance, however, for Austrian life and literature was as a journalist; under his editorship, the *Neue Freie Presse*—with which he was connected from 1868 on—became a power, not merely in Austria, but throughout Europe. Hartmann was a native of Bohemia and, in his youth, espoused the national cause of the Czechs, but the real champion of Bohemia's

K. Beck, 1817-79.

M. Hartmann, 1821-72.

[1] *Gesammelte Schriften*, 10 vols., Stuttgart, 1873-74.

interests in German literature was his fellow-countryman, Alfred Meissner (1822-85). Meissner's lyric poetry (*Gedichte*, 1845) was influenced by Byron, Lenau, and the French Romanticists, and his epic, *Ziska* (1846), is filled with the turbulent spirit of the revolutionary age. His novels, although then widely read, were little more than hackwork, for Meissner was not particular as to where he obtained his stories, or even in how far they were written by himself. Another Austrian poet of this period was Hermann von Gilm (1812-64),[1] a native of the Tyrol, who, with the finely strung temperament of a Romantic poet, combined a sturdy patriotism and liberal political views. In Vienna itself, the most gifted lyric genius about the middle of the century was Elisabeth Glück, known to literature as Betty Paoli (1814-94).[2] Warm and passionate as this poetess was by temperament, she expressed herself with a restraint and a freedom from sentimentality that suggest at times a comparison with her acknowledged model, Annette von Droste-Hülshoff.

A. Meissner, 1822-85.

H. von Gilm, 1812-64.

B. Paoli, 1814-94.

As a poet, Gottfried Kinkel (1815-82) has little in common with the writers just discussed, but, like them, he owed his reputation to his sympathy with the Revolution of 1848. Kinkel took an active part in the rising in Baden and was condemned to imprisonment for life; but, in 1850, through the agency of Karl Schurz (born 1829), who subsequently played a leading political *rôle* in the United States, he escaped to London. Kinkel's *Gedichte* (1843) were favourably received, and one of his epics, *Otto der Schütz* (1846), a forerunner of Scheffel's *Trompeter von Säkkingen*, ran through more than seventy editions; but his talents were hardly in proportion to his popularity: his work, as a whole, is characterised by that sentimental mediocrity which, when the Revolution was at an end, spread over all departments of German literature. In *Hans Ibeles in London* (1860), a story of German political refugees in England, Kinkel's wife, Johanna (1810-58), showed that she possessed more genius than her husband.

G. Kinkel, 1815-82.

Emanuel Geibel[3] formed the last link in the chain of revolutionary poets; and Geibel's share in the movement

E. Geibel, 1815-84.

[1] A convenient edition of Gilm's *Gedichte*, in Reclam's *Universal-Bibliothek*, No. 3391-3394, Leipzig, 1896.

[2] *Gedichte* (*Auswahl und Nachlass*), Stuttgart, 1895.

[3] *Gesammelte Werke*, 8 vols., 3rd ed., Stuttgart, 1893. Cp. T. Litzmann, *E. Geibel*, Berlin, 1887.

was limited virtually to his *Zeitstimmen* (1841). He had not the fitting temperament for a political singer, and openly disavowed all sympathy with the tendencies upheld by Herwegh and his friends. At the same time, Geibel was by no means a pronounced "reactionary" in poetry; his attitude towards politics was only one of indifference. Born in Lübeck in 1815, he studied classical philology at Bonn and Berlin. In the latter city, he obtained an introduction to the literary circles that had gathered round Chamisso, Bettina von Arnim, and J. E. Hitzig (1780-1849), and he lived in the same house as Willibald Alexis and the novelist L. Rellstab (1799-1860). In 1838, the Russian ambassador in Athens offered Geibel an engagement as tutor, and this gave him the longed-for opportunity of seeing Greece with his own eyes; here, too, he formed a warm friendship with Ernst Curtius, the archæologist (1814-96). After his return to Germany in the spring of 1840, Geibel's first task was to publish a collection of *Gedichte* (1840), which, a year afterwards, was followed by the *Zeitstimmen*. The tone of all his political lyrics is conciliatory; he pours oil on the troubled waters of party spirit, which, in these years, had encroached on literature.

> "Kein eitel Spielwerk ist mein Singen,
> Ich spür' in mir des Geistes Wehn.
> Und ob auch der Vernichtung Tönen
> Der Haufe rasch entgegenflammt!
> Zu bau'n, zu bilden, zu versöhnen,
> Fürwahr, mir dünkt's ein besser Amt."[1]

But, although no friend of the Revolution, Geibel sympathised with the national spirit that lay behind the unbalanced phrases of the revolutionary singers, and shared their hope of one day seeing a united Germany.

His poem, *An Georg Herwegh* (1841), which made it clear that he did not approve of the strong measures of Herwegh's party, won him favour in high places; Friedrich Wilhelm IV. granted him an annual pension of 300 thalers, and, from this time on, the flow of his poetry was almost unbroken. In 1843, he dedicated his *Volkslieder und Romanzen der Spanier* to Freiligrath, with whom he had spent the summer. This was, of course, previous to the appearance of

[1] *An den König von Preussen* (*Gesammelte Werke*, I, 227 f.)

Freiligrath's *Glaubensbekenntniss*, a book which came upon Geibel with a shock, the following year. The poets, however, remained friends. *Zwölf Sonette für Schleswig-Holstein* were published in 1846, and the *Juniuslieder* a year before the Revolution. Geibel has written better poems than any in these collections, but, as a whole, *Die Juniuslieder* touch a higher level than his other works. In 1851, Maximilian II. of Bavaria, intent on making Munich the artistic metropolis of Germany, invited Geibel to be an "Ehrenprofessor" in the university, and he at once became the centre of the literary coterie there. The seven years which Geibel spent in Munich were the most productive of his life. At this time he wrote the lyric epics *Der Mythus vom Dampf*, *Der Bildhauer des Hadrian*, *Der Tod des Tiberius*, the cycle of poems, *Ada*, in memory of his wife, whom he lost in 1855, three years after marriage, and, best of all, the lyrics contained in the *Neuen Gedichte* (1857). As a dramatist, Geibel was deficient in the power of vivid presentation; but *Meister Andrea*, a fantastic comedy written in 1855, and *Brunhild* (1858), an attempt to give a modern significance to the saga of the Nibelungs, were, although unsuited for the stage, widely read. In 1868, Geibel returned to his native town, Lübeck, where the Prussian king offered him a higher pension than he had received at the Bavarian Court, and where he lived to see realised his dream of Germany united under a Hohenzollern emperor. The volume of *Heroldsrufe* (1871), in which, however, there are also earlier poems, contains almost the only genuine poetry inspired by the war of 1870-71. Geibel died in 1884.

Juniuslieder, 1847.

Emanuel Geibel is the representative German poet of the epoch between 1848 and 1870. Without being either a great or, in the strict sense, an original genius, he had the undeniable faculty of coining "Volkslieder," of writing poetry that was sung after him by the nation at large. He inherited the vast treasures of the Romantic lyric, and made them his own, but he was not the singer of a new time; indeed, of all the eminent lyric poets in German literature, Geibel is, perhaps, the least individual and the least stimulating. His facility of writing verses was fatal to him; striking poetic thoughts are buried in commonplace phrases, or rendered trivial by a monotonous and conventional rhythm. No poet who

has written so much, or held so warm a place in popular regard, has had so little that was new to say — in this respect, Geibel may not unjustly be compared with the "Anacreontic" poets of the eighteenth century. And yet his influence was considerable, more lasting even than that of Freiligrath, who was a poet of a much stronger personality. Geibel's dramatic poems had, it is true, only a baleful effect, for they made dramas fashionable in which poetic language and lyric feeling took the place of dramatic force and action, and his epics were almost as little adapted to the requirements of the time as his plays; but, in his lyric poetry, as we shall see in a subsequent chapter, Geibel left his mark, not only on the poets of the Munich School, but through them upon the German lyric as a whole, almost down to the close of the nineteenth century.

M. von Strachwitz, 1822-47.

Of the lesser poets of this time, who were associated with Herwegh and his friends on the one hand and with Geibel on the other, a Silesian, Graf Moritz von Strachwitz (1822-47),[1] is noteworthy. Indeed, when it is remembered that Strachwitz died at the age of twenty-five, and that in two collections, *Lieder eines Erwachenden* (1842) and *Neue Gedichte* (1848), he left poems of such marked character as *Der Himmel ist blau*, or the national, patriotic song, *Germania*, it seems no paradox to say that he was the most gifted writer of the entire group. But before he died, Strachwitz had hardly developed his full originality; his verse clearly shows the influence, not merely of Herwegh and Geibel, but also of Platen.

The poets who have been mentioned in the present chapter exemplify the condition of the German lyric in the epoch succeeding that of Heine and "Young Germany"—of the revolutionary poetry, as well as of the more genuinely poetic verse, that sprang up as the political excitement subsided. The reaction did not, however, mature a vigorous, original lyric; the younger generation of poets preferred to fall back on sentimental pre-Revolutionary ideals, to dream patriotic and Romantic dreams of a revival of Barbarossa's empire, rather than to face the problems of their own time. If the German lyric of this period is to be estimated by its sincerity, the entire body of it grows pale before the writings of an un-

[1] *Gedichte*, in Reclam's *Universal-Bibliothek*, No. 1009, 1010, Leipzig, 1878.

assuming Westphalian authoress, who, as a strict Catholic, lived retired from the world, knew little of literary coteries or movements, and wrote more heartfelt poetry than any other poet of the age.

Annette von Droste-Hülshoff, 1797-1848.

Annette von Droste-Hülshoff,[1] Germany's greatest poetess, belonged to an old Münster family. She was born in 1797, passed an uneventful life, partly in her home, partly near Lake Constance, and died in the year of the Revolution. Outwardly, her life was little ruffled, and she was one of those strong natures that are able to stifle or conceal inward troubles. She seems never to have been absorbed by a passion, and died unmarried. Her best friend was Levin Schücking (1814-83), who, however, himself stood too much under the influence of "Young Germany" fully to appreciate her delicate spirituality. But beneath the exterior of this retiring, unattractive personality there was a rich mental life and a glowing poetic genius. Annette von Droste-Hülshoff is one of the most original lyric poets of the nineteenth century. She wrote without models, or such as she had belonged to the previous century. At most, Byron's influence is occasionally noticeable in such of her narrative poems as *Walther* (written in 1818), *Das Hospiz auf dem Grossen St Bernhard* (1838), and the magnificent *Schlacht im Lohner Bruch* (1838): the latter, the theme of which is the fight between Tilly and Christian of Brunswick in 1623, is one of the masterly epics in modern literature. Annette von Droste-Hülshoff's pessimism, again, bears some resemblance to Lenau's, in spite of the gulf that lay between the pious resignation of the Catholic and Lenau's defiant acceptance of the inevitable. But there is nothing of Heine's or of Geibel's sweetness in her poetry: it is almost repellent in its masculine acerbity. Her knowledge of nature is intimate and personal, although the poetry in which she describes it is never sentimental. She sings of the red soil of her native land, Westphalia; above all, of its forests and moors. But with her, nature is rarely, as it is in the poetry of the Swabians, or of the North German, Storm, a mirror for human sentiment and suffering; she loves it for itself. The poetry of the moor

[1] *Gesammelte Werke*, edited by W. Kreiten (with biography), 4 vols., Paderborn, 1884-87. Cp. H. Hüffer, *A. von Droste-Hülshoff*, 2nd ed., Gotha, 1890.

has never, perhaps, been more beautifully expressed than in the cycle of *Haidebilder*, which includes such gems as *Die Mergelgrube*, *Das Hirtenfeuer*, *Der Knabe im Moor*, *Der Haidemann*. The following strophes, describing the rising mists, are from the last mentioned of these poems:—

"'Geht, Kinder, nicht zu weit in's Bruch!
Die Sonne sinkt, schon surrt den Flug
Die Biene matter, schlafgehemmt,
Am Grunde schwimmt ein blasses Tuch,
Der Haidemann kömmt!' . . .

Man sieht des Hirten Pfeife glimmen
Und vor ihm her die Heerde schwimmen,
Wie Proteus seine Robbenschaaren
Heimschwemmt im grauen Ocean.
Am Dach die Schwalben zwitschernd fahren,
Und melancholisch kräht der Hahn.

Nun strecken nur der Föhren Wipfel
Noch aus dem Dunste grüne Gipfel,
Wie über'n Schnee Wacholderbüsche;
Ein leises Brodeln quillt im Moor,
Ein schwaches Schrillen, ein Gezische
Dringt aus der Niederung hervor."[1]

Annette von Droste-Hülshoff's technical mastery and virile restraint are classic in the pre-Romantic sense of that word, but her language is unclassical in so far as it draws vigour from her native soil; it bristles with expressive Westphalian phrases, and with those obscure ellipses in which the language of the people is rich. *Das geistliche Jahr*, which was not published until after the authoress's death (1851), contains the finest religious poetry of the nineteenth century; we have to turn—in German literature, at least—to the hymns of the Reformation-era to find anything so heartfelt, earnest, and yet poetically so perfect, as the poems which make up the *Geistliche Jahr*. Annette Droste-Hülshoff made many demands upon her readers; she had too little consideration for the tastes and the prejudices of the modern world ever to be popular, as Müller, Heine, and Geibel were popular poets; she is rather to be classed with Hölderlin—to whom she was by nature allied,—with Mörike and Keller, as an original force in the development of the German lyric.

[1] *Gesammelte Werke* (ed. W. Kreiten), 3, 87 f.

CHAPTER XII.

LITERATURE OF THE PROVINCE. THE DRAMA.

THE decade from 1840 to 1850 was not, in German literary history, entirely dominated by the revolutionary movement; it was also an age of re-organisation and new beginnings. The decisive battle of the first half of the century, that between "Jungdeutschland" and Romanticism, had, it will be remembered, been fought out at least ten years before the political struggle of 1848. A fundamental principle of the Young German party was to reinstate nature and simplicity in the place of the fantastic unrealities which the Romantic poets loved, and an immediate consequence of the movement was a revived interest in the literature of the province. Not that the later Romanticists had overlooked the province; on the contrary, they had a keen sense for the poetry of peasant-life, and encouraged writing in dialect, but it was left to a later generation to cultivate such a literature on strictly realistic principles. Kleist, Brentano, Arnim, had all written of the Volk in a more or less Romantic way; but it was Immermann, in *Der Oberhof*, who first regarded the peasant from the new standpoint, and, about the same time, Albert Bitzius —known to literature as Jeremias Gotthelf (1797-1854)[1] —wrote his *Bauern-Spiegel oder Lebensgeschichte des Jeremias Gotthelf von ihm selbst berichtet* (1837). Bitzius was a Swiss pastor who turned to authorship late in life; his long series of novels—prominent among which are *Wie Uli der Knecht glücklich ward* (1841), *Uli der Pächter* (1846), and *Elsi, die seltsame Magd* (1850)—were avowedly didactic in purpose, although Gotthelf's moralising was too naïve, seriously

A. Bitzius, 1797-1854.

[1] *Gesammelte Schriften*, 24 vols., Berlin, 1861; his two chief works also in Reclam's *Universal-Bibliothek*, Nos. 2333-2335 and 2672-2675, Leipzig, 1898.

to detract from the masterly objectivity and epic sweep of his narrative. At the same time, it was not he but Auerbach, a Swabian writer, who first made the peasant-story a recognised form of fiction in European literature.

B. Auerbach, 1812-82.

Berthold Auerbach,[1] the son of Jewish parents, was born at Nordstetten, in the Swabian portion of the Black Forest, in 1812. He soon emancipated himself from the narrow orthodox education which his father gave him, and studied at Tübingen, where Strauss won his interest for Spinoza, the hero of his first novel (*Spinoza*, 1837). In 1843, a volume of *Schwarzwälder Dorfgeschichten* appeared and at once made him famous. Their publication could not have been more opportune; the fiction of the day was that of Gutzkow and his school, and dealt mainly, as we have seen, with social questions and plans of reform and revolution, and to a public weary of "Tendenz-litteratur" these stories of village-life came as a welcome relief. Their effect was magical; Auerbach's readers did not stop to consider whether the life he described was real or not—indeed, if they had remembered Bitzius, they would have realised that Auerbach's peasants were unduly endowed with their creator's own temperament—but their sympathies were at once won by the naïve elements in the stories and by the exaltation of the village, as opposed to the town. The secret of Auerbach's success was that he made a compromise between a realism which would not have been tolerated at the middle of the century, and the traditional idealism of the Romantic writers; and, although it would be unfair to compare him with the writers who came after him, he was, in relation to the literary *milieu* from which he sprang, a genuine realist and a forerunner of masters like Keller and Anzengruber.

Schwarzwälder Dorfgeschichten, 1843-54.

The early *Schwarzwälder Dorfgeschichten*, such as *Der Tolpatsch*, *Tonele mit der gebissenen Wange*, *Befehlerles*, show Auerbach's art in the most favourable light; in the subsequent volumes (1848-54), the natural colours are paler and the author's fondness for philosophic reflection is more obtrusive; characteristic examples of this tendency are the famous stories, *Die Frau Professorin* (1846) and *Barfüssele* (1857). Auerbach is also the author of several long novels in the style of Gutzkow and Spielhagen; *Auf der Höhe* (1865) and *Das*

Auf der Höhe, 1865.

[1] *Gesammelte Schriften*, new ed., 18 vols., Stuttgart, 1892-95.

Landhaus am Rhein (1869) were popular in their day, and are more readable than Gutzkow's novels, but they do not rank with the "Novellen." On the surface, these novels of social life appear to be more homogeneous than a book like *Die Ritter vom Geiste*, but, in reality, they are retrogressive. Auerbach had no new theories of fiction like Gutzkow; he was satisfied to imitate the type of romance that had been handed down by the Romanticists; like them, he loved to describe the inner life of his personages, and his books are burdened with diaries, letters, and confessions. *Waldfried* (1874), written after the war, shows the interest with which Auerbach followed the political movement, but, as a novel, it is confused and overladen. Towards the close of his life —he died as late as 1882 — Auerbach returned to the "Dorfgeschichte" which had won him his first success, but age lay heavy upon him, and the attitude of the time towards this form of story had also undergone a change. The result was that *Nach dreissig Jahren* (1876), and the novels, *Der Forstmeister* (1879) and *Brigitta* (1880), found comparatively few readers.

Das Landhaus am Rhein, 1869.

Waldfried, 1874.

The *Schwarzwälder Dorfgeschichten* called forth a veritable flood of peasant-literature. Hermann Kurz, Mörike's friend, and Melchior Meyr (1810-71) wrote Swabian "Novellen,"[1] Hermann von Schmid (1815-80),[2] *Bayrische Geschichten* (1861-64), F. von Kobell (1803-82) lyrics and Volkslieder in the Upper Bavarian dialect; while Adolf Pichler (1819-1900) described the life of the Tyrol. A master of German prose about the middle of the century was the Austrian, Adalbert Stifter (1805-68),[3] born at Oberplan, in the Bohemian Forest. In the idylls and stories which make up his *Studien* (1844-50) and *Bunte Steine* (1852), Stifter reveals a warm sympathy for nature in all her moods; but his character-drawing is shadowy and does not stand on the same level as his finished descriptions of scenery. Subsequent novels, *Der Nachsommer* (1857) and *Witiko* (1864-67), were strongly didactic in character.

A. Stifter, 1805-68.

Close on Auerbach's heels followed another novelist of

[1] M. Meyr, *Erzählungen aus dem Reis* (1856-70), 4th ed., 4 vols., Leipzig, 1892.

[2] *Gesammelte Schriften*, 50 vols., 2nd ed., Leipzig, 1889-92.

[3] *Werke*, ed. by R. Fürst, 6 vols., Leipzig, 1899. Cp. J. K. Markus, *A. Stifter*, 2nd ed., Vienna, 1879.

provincial life, to whom the former had lent a helping hand —a pupil who soon threw his master into the shade. Fritz Reuter[1] was the son of the Bürgermeister of Stavenhagen, a little town in Mecklenburg, where he was born in 1810. In 1833, for merely wearing, as a student in Jena, the colours of a political club, Reuter was condemned first to death, then to thirty years' imprisonment in a fortress, of which he had undergone seven, when the Grand Duke of Mecklenburg-Schwerin effected his release. His good name was lost, and he had little zeal, when set at liberty, to begin life afresh, and still less to surmount the obstacles which arose on every side. Reuter's life was virtually ruined by the tyranny of the Prussian government, and until his literary work gave him a status and a profession, he was in danger of becoming a slave to drink; had it not been for his wife, his genius might have remained undeveloped. It was she who encouraged him to publish his first book, a collection of *Läuschen und Rimels* ("Short Stories and Rhymes," 1853), in dialect, which was widely read in the "Plattdeutsch" districts of North Germany. Reuter's reputation spread beyond his home with the three Plattdeutsch novels—*Ut de Franzosentid* (1860), descriptive of the condition of Mecklenburg in the end of the Napoleonic age, *Ut mine Festungstid* (1863), the story of his imprisonment, told without either bitterness or useless regret, and his masterpiece, *Ut mine Stromtid* (1862-64), the "Stromtid" being the years he spent in Mecklenburg as agriculturist or "Strom," after his release from prison.

F. Reuter, 1810-74.

Reuter was a born story-teller, but he displayed little art in constructing his novels. The anecdote, the short humorous incident, was his true field, and all his longer works, with the possible exception of *Ut mine Stromtid*, are virtually collections of episodes. In so far as Reuter had a master, it was Dickens, but he borrowed only a few hints as to method and exposition. Reuter's personages are, almost without exception, drawn direct from life, and his humour is peculiarly North German. In common, however, with his English model, he has a tendency to exaggerate one element in a character at the expense of others, and, when opportunity

[1] *Sämmtliche Werke* (Volksausgabe), 7 vols., 9th ed., Wismar, 1895. Cp. K. T. Gaedertz, *Aus Fritz Reuters jungen und alten Tagen*, 3rd ed., Wismar, 1899.

offers, expresses himself in a sentimental tone which was widespread in European fiction about the middle of the century: but Reuter is more of a realist than Dickens, and his humour rarely takes the form of caricature. No other German province is so completely reflected in literature as Mecklenburg in Reuter's *Ut mine Stromtid;* while Auerbach only described certain types of Black Forest life, Reuter brought his native country before his readers in its most varied aspects. Figures like the farmer Hawermann, the amusing Fritz Triddelfitz, the "Frau Pasturin," and a dozen others, crowned by the inimitable "Entspekter," Unkel Bräsig, are charming humorous portraits, and alone sufficient to establish Reuter's place in the front rank of German novelists. From 1863 to his death in 1874, Reuter lived near Eisenach, at the foot of the Wartburg. But in the *Franzosentid*, *Festungstid*, and *Stromtid*, he had exhausted what he had to say to his generation: his later stories, such as *Dörchläuchting* (1866), in spite of excellent character-sketches, do not add anything to what is to be found in his chief works.

Ut mine Stromtid, 1862-64.

Fritz Reuter is one leading representative of modern "Plattdeutsch" literature; Klaus Groth (1819-1899),[1] a native of Holstein, is the other. The two men stand in a characteristic antithesis to each other. Reuter was a novelist; his talent was epic: Groth, on the other hand, was essentially a lyric poet. Reuter's books found readers all over Germany, while Groth's poetry, with its exclusively local interest and more pronounced dialect, awakened little interest outside the poet's native province. Groth's chief work, the book on which his popularity rests, is *Quickborn*, a collection of poems in the Dithmarschen dialect; it appeared in 1852, shortly before Reuter's first stories and rhymes. Subsequently, Groth published several volumes of Plattdeutsch stories (*Vertelln*, 1855-59), which, however, mainly show the limitations of his peculiar talent.

Klaus Groth, 1819-99

While, about the middle of the century, fiction stood so high in favour, the German drama was passing through a critical phase. The period under consideration might be described as one of significant dramatic experiments; for, from about 1840 onward, the foundations were being laid for

The drama.

1 *Gesammelte Werke*, 4 vols., Kiel, 1893. Cp. K. Eggers, *Klaus Groth und die plattdeutsche Dichtung*, Hamburg, 1885; A. Bartels, *K. Groth*, Leipzig, 1889.

that dramatic revival which took place in Northern Europe during the last quarter of the century. Friedrich Hebbel, the chief dramatist to be discussed, was one of the most original German poets of his time; an innovator as no other European dramatist between Victor Hugo and Henrik Ibsen, he exerted an influence, more powerful than that of either Kleist or Grillparzer, on the subsequent development of the German drama.

C. F. Hebbel, 1813-63.

Christian Friedrich Hebbel[1] was one of the few dramatic poets whose home has been on the German coasts, a region so fertile in poetry and fiction. Born in 1813, as the son of a poor mason in the village of Wesselburen in Holstein, Hebbel grew up amidst depressing surroundings and the direst poverty. In 1835 he went to Hamburg, where, by heroic perseverance, he made up for the defects in his early education, and subsequently attended the Universities of Heidelberg and Munich. From law, to which he first applied himself, he soon turned to literature. In 1839, after having found his way back to Hamburg, he was stimulated by Gutzkow's tragedy, *Saul*, to put his own theories of tragedy into practice, and he wrote his first drama, *Judith*, which, in 1840, was produced in Berlin. The most characteristic feature of *Judith*, which bears marks of the "Sturm und Drang" in Hebbel's own life, is the standpoint from which the poet regards the story of Holofernes and his murderess. Judith is here the saviour of her people, but, like Schiller's Tell, only after she has avenged her personal wrongs; the conflict in the heroine's inner life thus forms the centre of Hebbel's drama. *Judith* is a brutal work, full of strong passions and unbridled feelings, and undoubtedly fell far short of its author's intentions; Holofernes, in particular, is but a rhetorical embodiment of abstract qualities, in whom it is impossible to believe. But—and here is the specifically modern element in the drama—Hebbel has endowed Judith not merely with a tragic, heroic individuality, but also with a power to rise to greatness through sin, which was new to the European drama of the time.

Judith, 1840.

While, in the tragedy of *Judith*, the development and assertion of a woman's personality in the ancient world is depicted,

[1] *Sämmtliche Werke*, ed. by E. Kuh and H. Krumm, 12 vols., Hamburg, 1891-92; also by R. M. Werner, in 12 vols. (six have appeared), Berlin, 1901 ff. Cp. E. Kuh, *Biographie F. Hebbels*, 2 vols., Vienna, 1877.

the same theme is, in *Genoveva* (1843), transferred to the middle ages, and in *Maria Magdalene* (1846) to a wholly modern *milieu*. For *Genoveva*, Hebbel chose the story which had been decked out by Tieck in characteristic Romantic costume. In Hebbel's play, however, the chief figure is not Genoveva, but her lover, Golo, who, in former versions of the story, had been little more than the incorporation of evil. With the instinct of the born dramatist, and his own over-keen sense for what was psychologically interesting, Hebbel selected, as the central figure of the tragedy, not the meek, suffering Genoveva, but Golo, the victim of a passion over which he loses control. *Genoveva*, 1843.

The performances of *Judith* in Berlin brought Hebbel fame, but they did not improve his material prospects. At this point, however, as twice before in the history of German letters, a Danish king came to the rescue: Christian VIII. granted Hebbel a travelling scholarship, which enabled him to visit Paris, and here, in 1843, was written the greater part of *Maria Magdalene, ein bürgerliches Trauerspiel*. For this drama, which was performed with great success at Leipzig, in 1846, Hebbel borrowed some traits from experiences of his own in Munich, but it is, in the main, a more genuinely objective work than either *Judith* or *Genoveva*. *Maria Magdalene*—the title is not well chosen—is an excellently planned play; in technical respects, indeed, it is a model "tragedy of common life." The construction of the plot could not be simpler. A young girl in humble life believes that the man she loves has deserted her; she gives herself to another, is abandoned by him, and drowns herself. The central figure is not, however, as might be expected, the heroine, Klara, but her father, Meister Anton; the whole family is shipwrecked on his unbending pride and rectitude; Klara drowns herself to save his honour, not her own, and the world which he has built up for himself, and in which he alone believes, falls to pieces. This is the tragic idea to which Hebbel has sought to give expression. In the details of its workmanship, *Maria Magdalene* owes much to the traditional "bürgerliche Tragödie" as handed down by Iffland, but the characters, even the most episodic, are skilfully drawn, and the conflict, unlike that of *Judith* or *Genoveva*, lies within the sphere of ordinary human sympathy. *Maria Magdalene*, 1846.

His Danish bounty enabled Hebbel, in 1844 and 1845, to visit Italy, and, towards the end of the latter year, he settled in Vienna. To this period of his life belong a number of minor plays which must be reckoned among his failures. *Ein Trauerspiel in Sicilien* (1851) and *Julia* (1851) reflect the dissatisfied life which the poet had led in Italy; *Der Diamant* (1847), an older piece, and a "Märchen," *Der Rubin* (1851), fail owing to Hebbel's deficient sense of comedy. By far the most pleasing of this group is *Michel Angelo* (1855), a dramatised anecdote relating to the great artist: in order to put to shame those critics who held up to him the superior beauty of the antique, Michel Angelo is said to have mutilated and buried a work by himself, and the critics discovering it, fall into the snare which has thus been laid for them.

Minor dramas.

In Vienna, Hebbel's prospects showed signs of improvement: it seemed as if a change for the better had at last taken place in his checkered career Here he found not only generous patrons, but also his future wife, Christine Enghaus, an actress in the Hofburgtheater. From this time on, his work became less oppressively gloomy, and, with the exception of *Agnes Bernauer*, was in verse. The first tragedy of this new period of Hebbel's life was *Herodes und Mariamne* (1850), which, although unsuccessful on the stage, marks a further development of his genius. There is something almost barbarous in the actual facts of the Jewish story which are here dramatised. Herodes commands that, should he not return alive from a journey within a certain time, Mariamne, the wife he passionately loves, is to be slain, in order that she may not belong to another after he is dead. He returns, however, unexpectedly, and is coldly received by Mariamne, who, in the meantime, has learned his instructions. Herod's suspicion is kindled, and he leaves her once more under the same conditions. A report reaches Jerusalem that he has been killed, but instead of mourning for her husband, Mariamne holds a festival, in the midst of which Herod suddenly appears. She is tried and condemned to death; too late it comes to light that she is innocent, that the festival was only a ruse to force Herod—who had not faith enough in her love to believe that she would die with him—to kill her himself. In spite of the complicated and improbable psychological problems

Hebbel in Vienna.

Herodes und Mariamne, 1850.

which had here to be solved, Hebbel has made *Herodes und Mariamne* a more convincing play than the bare outline of its plot might lead the reader to suppose; the characters are more consistent than in his earlier dramas, and the picture presented by the last act, where the Roman world and Asiatic barbarism clash with the new epoch heralded by Christianity, is one of the enduring achievements of German dramatic literature.

Agnes Bernauer, 1852.

Agnes Bernauer, the heroine of Hebbel's next drama (1852), was a surgeon's daughter of Augsburg, who was secretly married to Duke Albrecht III. of Bavaria. The marriage brings the young Duke into conflict with his father and with his duties to the state; advantage is taken of Albrecht's absence to accuse Agnes of witchcraft, and she is drowned in the Danube. Agnes Bernauer's fate has been repeatedly dramatised by German poets, for the first time, it will be remembered, by Graf Törring, towards the end of the eighteenth century, while for Otto Ludwig it had also a peculiar fascination. The reason why Hebbel's version has never become popular is probably because Agnes does not stand in the immediate foreground of the tragedy; she is beautiful and is sacrificed to the interests of the state: that is all. The real conflict is between the rights of the individual as represented by Agnes's lover, and the claims of the state which are urged by his father: the tragedy depicts the cold triumph of political reasoning over passion.

Gyges und sein Ring, 1856.

Gyges und sein Ring (1856) is Hebbel's masterpiece. His love for the strange, the psychologically involved, was again the chief reason which led him to dramatise this fable from Herodotus. King Kandaules of Lydia allows the young Greek Gyges to see, in her naked beauty, his wife Rhodope, whom Oriental custom condemns to complete seclusion from the world. Gyges renders himself invisible by means of a magic ring, but the queen, learning of the disgrace that her husband has inflicted upon her, challenges Gyges to wipe out the stain upon her honour by killing Kandaules and marrying her. He obeys, but no sooner is she married to him than she stabs herself. The dramatic motive of the play, Rhodope's exaggerated sense of a woman's honour, is even more at variance with ordinary experience than Herod's overpowering love in *Herodes und Mariamne;* but *Gyges und sein Ring*

is, in the naturalness of its development, an advance on its predecessor; the solution of the problem which Hebbel here set himself is less open to question. The verse of the drama, too, is such as Hebbel had not written previously and hardly ever wrote again. One short quotation must serve as an example. It is Kandaules the idealist, who dreams of a new age of freedom, that speaks—Kandaules, whose soul revolts against the oriental barbarism over which he reigns, and under whose iron laws he himself must suffer:—

> "Ich weiss gewiss, die Zeit wird einmal kommen,
> Wo Alles denkt, wie ich; was steckt denn auch
> In Schleiern, Kronen oder rost'gen Schwertern,
> Das ewig wäre? Doch die müde Welt
> Ist über diesen Dingen eingeschlafen,
> Die sie in ihrem letzten Kampf errang,
> Und hält sie fest. . . .
> Die Welt braucht ihren Schlaf, wie Du und ich
> Den uns'rigen, sie wächs't, wie wir, und stärkt sich,
> Wenn sie dem Tod verfallen scheint und Thoren
> Zum Spotte reizt."[1]

Die Nibelungen, 1862.

On his most ambitious dramatic work, *Die Nibelungen* (1862), Hebbel spent seven years of his life. *Die Nibelungen* is a trilogy which, in form, resembles *Wallenstein* or *Das goldene Vliess;* it consists of a one-act prologue, *Der gehörnte Siegfried*, and two five-act dramas, *Siegfrids Tod* and *Kriemhilds Rache.* Although in beauty of verse and in dramatic portraiture *Die Nibelungen* is not inferior either to *Herodes und Mariamne* or to *Gyges und sein Ring*, the subject did not afford Hebbel's genius such good opportunities. Contrary to his usual practice, he made little alteration in the story of the *Nibelungenlied;* he dramatised the epic, instead, like Richard Wagner a few years earlier, in his *Ring des Nibelungen*, of building up an independent drama on the saga. And this was undoubtedly detrimental to the value and success of Hebbel's work. To a certain extent, of course, he was obliged to modernise his theme; he endeavoured to gloss over the barbaric strength of Brunhild; he made the most of the idyllic and sentimental episodes of *Kriemhilds Rache;* he gave the drama—and no one was better able to do so than he—a grandiose background, where Christianity triumphs over the old German heathenism. The trilogy is thus a com-

[1] Act 5 (R. M. Werner's edition, 3, 335 f.)

promise between the rough medieval simplicity of the German epic and the poet's own love for involved problems; but he has retained too much of the original spirit of the *Nibelungenlied* to allow of the full development of his own peculiar art. Admirable as Hebbel's figures are,—above all, Hagen, the grim ideal of the Germanic virtue of "Treue," Siegfried, to whom the poet has given the light-hearted joviality of the Spielmann, and Kriemhild,—they live only as pale reflections of the heroic world, and are neither genuinely modern nor genuinely medieval.

Demetrius, 1864.

Demetrius (1864) was, in the first instance, an attempt to finish Schiller's tragedy of that name, but, like Schiller's, this, too, remained unfinished. Hebbel soon realised that his method was separated from Schiller's by too wide a gulf for him to follow in the latter's footsteps, and he commenced *Demetrius* anew in his own way; but as far as can be judged from the two fragments, Schiller's dramatic objectivity was better adapted to the subject than his successor's excessive refinement. Between *Gyges* and the *Nibelungen*, Hebbel wrote his *Mutter und Kind* (1859), a pleasing epic, or rather novel, in verse. Here, however, the poet's love for psychological problems, and his endeavour to avoid the simple and the direct, mar, to some extent, the effectiveness of the whole; but the poem is full of fine passages, and is a not unworthy example of the idyllic epic, on which Goethe set a classic stamp. Hebbel's lyric poetry (*Gedichte*, 1842, 1848, and 1857) is deficient in all the qualities we are accustomed to look for in the German lyric; but it possesses, at least, individuality and poetic strength, if little sweetness. The key to the poet's personality, however, is to be found not in his lyrics, but in his *Tagebücher*;[1] whatever may be the ultimate value of his dramatic work, there is no question of the thoroughness with which he laboured, and of the magnificent earnestness of his struggle for his art. How much the modern drama owes to him, how many of the most vital ideas of our time may be traced to his initiative, appears almost more clearly in these *Tagebücher* than in the dramas themselves. His death took place on December 13, 1863.

Mutter und Kind, 1859.

Gedichte, 1842, 1848, 1857.

Tagebücher.

[1] Ed. in 2 vols. by F. Bamberg, Berlin, 1885-87. Cp. also Hebbel's *Briefwechsel* by the same editor, 2 vols., Berlin, 1890-92, and *Nachlese* by R. M. Werner, 2 vols., Berlin, 1900.

O. Ludwig, 1813-65.

Although Otto Ludwig[1] denied all allegiance to Hebbel, his most important drama, *Der Erbförster*, was obviously suggested by *Maria Magdalene*. Otto Ludwig was born in 1813 at Eisfeld, in Thuringia, and was thus of the same age as Hebbel; he died at Dresden in 1865. Ludwig was one of those "problematic natures" who go through life without obtaining happiness, or even satisfaction from it. Outwardly uneventful, his career was inwardly a succession of struggles, rebuffs, and disenchantments; he was born out of his time and he felt it. He shrank from the world, and poverty and ill-health only made his isolation the harder to bear; and in 1844, after a short residence in Dresden, he retired to a lonely house near Meissen. In 1850, however, when *Der Erbförster* brought him fame, he emerged for a time from his obscurity, made literary friends, and settled once more in Dresden, where were written a second tragedy, *Die Makkabäer* and his "Novellen."

Der Erbförster, 1850.

Ludwig looked upon himself as a realist, but he is rather to be compared with a *genre* painter. His strength lay in the careful observance of detail; he loved to describe and to dwell on the infinitely little. The plot of *Der Erbförster* is sensational, and its style recalls the "bürgerliche Drama," even the "Schicksalstragödie"; but the *milieu* of the play is worked out with great care. The forester of an estate which has just changed hands does not believe that the new owner is legally entitled to remove him, his father and grandfather having been foresters there before him, and regards himself as possessing a hereditary right to the position. Refusing to thin out some trees, he receives the threatened dismissal. Hereupon follow thoughts of revenge, which are fanned into flame by improbable coincidences; and ultimately he shoots his own daughter in the belief that she is his master's son. Crude as *Der Erbförster* seems from the bare outline of the story, it is an effective and convincing tragedy on the stage; the characters, which are, without exception, admirably drawn, are less complicated than Hebbel's, and, for that reason, more comprehensible to the listener.

Die Makkabäer, 1853.

Ludwig's *Makkabäer* (1853), the subject of which was taken from the *Apocrypha*, is written wholly in verse. The

[1] *Gesammelte Schriften*, ed. A. Stern and E. Schmidt, 6 vols., Leipzig, 1891-92; also by A. Bartels, 6 vols., Leipzig, 1900.

traditions of Leah's heroic sacrifice of her seven sons to her religion are here brought into connection with the historical revolt of the Maccabees and their victory over Antiochus Eupator. The realistic detail which Ludwig lavished on his Thuringian drama was impossible in *Die Makkabäer;* but he made up for it by more careful construction and workmanship. Yet, even allowing for the difficulty—a difficulty with which every modern writer has to contend—of interesting his contemporaries in antique or Biblical themes, *Die Makkabäer* cannot be called a successful tragedy of its class. The dramatic action practically reaches its climax at the close of the second act, and the two subsequent acts are occupied with personages and incidents which are but loosely connected with the main theme. With the exception of one or two individual scenes and the fine character of Judah, *Die Makkabäer* does not leave by any means so lasting an impression on the reader as *Der Erbförster.*

Ludwig's dramatic work suffered from the narrowness of his critical standpoint; he was an uncompromising admirer of Shakespeare, — his *Shakespeare-Studien* were published in 1871,—and the entire drama, from Schiller to his own fragments, stood or fell by an Elizabethan standard. This constant insistence upon an impossible criterion explains, too, why he himself was comparatively unproductive. He remodelled his sketches and plays until their original form was past recognition; he approached his subjects from all sides, and consequently left behind him more fragments than completed works. A few early comedies, *Hanss Frei* (1842-43), *Die Pfarrrose* (1845), *Die Rechte des Herzens* (1845), and, best of all, *Das Fräulein von Scuderi* (1848), based on Hoffmann's story of that name, were finished, but his drama on Agnes Bernauer —a published fragment bears the title *Der Engel von Augsburg* —occupied him all his life without reaching completion.

Shakespeare-Studien, 1871.

Comedies.

It is as a novelist that Ludwig's reputation is most secure. He began by writing short stories, and a satirical sketch, written under Hoffmann's influence, dates from the winter of 1842-43. In 1857 appeared *Die Heiterethei* and *Aus dem Regen in die Traufe*, both admirable novels of Thuringian village life, and to the preceding year belongs *Zwischen Himmel und Erde.* In this masterpiece, two brothers, Fritz and Apollonius, slaters by vocation, love the same woman. Apollonius,

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Zwischen Himmel und Erde 1856.

shy and retiring, loses his opportunity of winning her, and on returning from his "Wanderjahre," finds her married to his brother. The latter now regards Apollonius with a guilty hatred, and one day, when both brothers are working upon a church steeple, "between heaven and earth," he tries to throw Apollonius down, and loses his own life in the attempt. Apollonius is free to marry his first love; but the shadow of the dead brother stands between them, and he renounces her. The chain of development is carefully welded together, and every picture the author calls up, from the first page to the last, is clearly focussed; *Zwischen Himmel und Erde* is an excellent example of detail-painting on a large canvas. The background of the novel, as of Ludwig's shorter stories, is his Thuringian home; his work is Thuringian as Annette von Droste's poetry is Westphalian, and, like hers, Ludwig's style is tinged by the provincialisms of his native dialect. His language is neither smooth nor easy, but it is terse and powerful, and at times he writes passages of dramatic eloquence unsurpassed in modern German prose. Above all, *Zwischen Himmel und Erde* is free from purpose or "Tendenz"—no small virtue in an age when the novel was still dominated by the theories of "Young Germany."

Among the dramatists who were contemporary with Hebbel and Ludwig, mention has to be made of Robert Griepenkerl (1810-68), whose tragedies, *Maximilian Robespierre* (1851) and *Die Girondisten* (1852), suggest a comparison with Georg Büchner's fine drama of the French Revolution, *Danton's Tod*. The revolutionary spirit is also reflected in the early plays of R. von Gottschall (born 1823); but his most successful piece was *Pitt und Fox*, a comedy modelled on Scribe, and performed in 1854; and the many plays he has since written are all in the style of the middle of the century. As a literary historian, Gottschall is the author of a widely read work, *Die deutsche Nationallitteratur des 19. Jahrhunderts*, of which the first edition was published as early as 1855. Oskar von Redwitz (1823-91) was famous in his day as the author of a sentimental Romantic epic, *Amaranth* (1849), but is now only remembered by his play *Philippine Welser* (1859). A frequently performed drama of those years was *Narciss* (1856), by A. E. Brachvogel (1824-78), whose talent, as is also to be seen from his novels, was

essentially theatrical. The most popular German comedy-writer since Kotzebue was the Saxon, Roderich Benedix (1811-73). The plays of Benedix combine a homely provincialism with undoubted powers of characterisation and command of stage effects, but they possess little or no literary interest, except, perhaps, as modern equivalents of the Saxon comedy of the eighteenth century. Less talented than Benedix, Charlotte Birch-Pfeiffer (1800-68) adapted popular novels to the stage—*Dorf und Stadt* (1848), for example, from Auerbach's *Frau Professorin*, and *Die Waise aus Lowood* (1855) from *Jane Eyre*—in the style of the traditional "Rührstücke" of Iffland and Kotzebue.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE NOVEL FROM 1848 TO 1870.

As the storms of the Revolution gradually subsided, German literature found itself upon what might be described as a uniform plateau. The period between 1848 and 1870 is not devoid of outstanding names and noteworthy writings, but the general impression which it leaves is one of mediocrity. What was great in the age awakened little or no response on the part of the nation; it was an epoch without youth, and consequently without enthusiasm. All that "Young Germany" had dreamt of politically, all that the Revolutions of 1830 and 1848 had promised, was still as far from realisation as if these upheavals had never taken place; and the nation was overcome by a sense of hopelessness. The stagnation and provincialism, into which the German mind is so prone to fall, again made itself felt and frustrated every effort, until the struggle of 1870-71, by placing Germany in the front rank of European nations, and giving her new responsibilities, brought a fresh incentive to bear on her literature and art.

The philosophic movement.

As regards the general character of this period, the most conspicuous change was that Hegelianism gradually lost ground—a change mainly due to the rise of a new power in the intellectual life of Europe, to natural science and the positive philosophy associated with it. Strauss's *Leben Jesu* had, although Strauss himself was a disciple of the Hegelian school, done much to clear the way for a materialistic philosophy; but Hegelianism was first shaken to its foundation by Ludwig A. Feuerbach (1804-72), whose work on *Das Wesen des Christenthums* appeared in 1841, and formed a prominent landmark in the development of positive thinking. The new intellectual movement was, however, a result of foreign

stimulus. In France and England, Auguste Comte's positivism had acted as an antidote to the unhealthy half-religious, half-social theorisings of Saint-Simon—theorisings which in Germany had made some progress under the Young German School—and Comte's influence found its way to Germany, if not directly, at least through English thinkers, such, for instance, as John Stuart Mill. On sociology and political economy, again, Arnold Ruge (1802-80), Ferdinand Lassalle (1825-64), and Karl Marx (1818-83), whose famous work, *Das Kapital*, began to appear in 1867, helped to introduce advanced English theories. The first and most distinguished of Darwin's followers in Germany was Ernst Haeckel (born 1834), who, since 1862, has been professor in Jena; in Switzerland, Jakob Moleschott (1822-93) vindicated the rights of science to be treated purely empirically; while men like Karl Vogt (1817-95) and Ludwig Büchner (1824-99), the author of an attractively written but superficial work, *Kraft und Stoff* (1855), popularised the standpoint of modern science. Hegelian idealism had a hard stand against the attacks of this scientific and sociological battery that was brought to bear on it between 1850 and 1870. The new philosophy, on the other hand, was hardly adapted to form a basis for literature, and it is not surprising to find poetic souls, who did not regard scientific positivism as the world's salvation, harking back to the philosophy of Schopenhauer. Schopenhauer's day, indeed, had now come; these decades with their resigned, passive spirit, were more favourable to the spread of his ideas than the days when Romanticism and Realism clashed, and when *Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung* had just appeared. The higher poetry of the period under consideration took refuge in pessimism.

As far as literature is concerned, the period from 1848 to 1870 was pre-eminently an age of fiction. The experimental beginnings, made on a grandiose scale by men like Gutzkow and Laube, now began to be appreciated. One of the chief German novelists of this age was Gustav Freytag,[1] who was born at Kreuzburg, in Upper Silesia, in 1816, and died in 1895. To the Romantic wonderland of German antiquity Freytag was introduced in Breslau by Hoffmann von

G. Freytag, 1816-95.

[1] *Gesammelte Werke*, 22 vols., Leipzig, 1886-88. Cp. C. Alberti, *Gustav Freytag*, Leipzig, 1890, and F. Seiler, *Gustav Freytag*, Leipzig, 1898.

Fallersleben; while at Berlin, he studied under Lachmann. In 1839, he became Privatdocent at the University of Breslau, shortly afterwards to relinquish an academic career for literature. In 1848, he and Julian Schmidt (1818-86), the literary historian, became editors of *Die Grenzboten*, a bi-monthly review, with which Freytag maintained his connection until 1870. Freytag's personal tastes ran in the direction of the drama rather than the novel; his academic studies had been mainly directed to the drama, and his *Technik des Dramas* (1863) is a valuable, if now somewhat old-fashioned, treatise on dramaturgy. His first successes were also plays. *Die Brautfahrt, oder Kunz von der Rosen*, he wrote in 1841; and it was followed by *Die Valentine* (1847), and *Graf Waldemar* (1848), dramas which treat, with a rather pointed "Tendenz," modern problems. Freytag's only poetic tragedy in the higher style, *Die Fabier* (1859), was a failure, but, six years earlier, he had written *Die Journalisten* (1852), one of the best German comedies of the nineteenth century. It speaks volumes for the vitality of this play that, although dealing largely with politics, and especially with the part played by journalism at elections,—in other words, with a condition of affairs that has long ceased to exist as Freytag described it,—*Die Journalisten* is still a favourite comedy on the German stage. This is due, in the first instance, to the fresh humour of its situations, and also to the fact that from his predecessors of the Young German School, Freytag had learned the art of writing a brilliant, if somewhat superficial, dialogue. In his hero, a journalist, Konrad Bolz, Freytag gave modern German literature its favourite type of *bon-vivant* or "Lebemann." Here the witty man of the world, whom the preceding generation had introduced from French literature, is thoroughly Germanised, and, from this time on, becomes a stock figure in German fiction and comedy.

His dramas.

Die Journalisten, 1852.

"Der Roman soll das Volk da suchen, wo es in seiner Tüchtigkeit zu finden ist, nämlich bei der Arbeit." These words, written by Julian Schmidt,[1] form the motto of *Soll und Haben* (1855), Freytag's best novel. Gutzkow first set the example of theorising about the mission of the novel; but Goethe had written *Wilhelm Meisters Wanderjahre* and Im-

Soll und Haben, 1855.

[1] *Geschichte der deutschen Nationallitteratur im 19. Jahrhundert*, Leipzig, 1853, 2, 370.

mermann his *Epigonen* with an object in view not unsimilar to that which Freytag here made his own. As has been justly observed, however, Freytag was the first to construe the word "Arbeit" as meaning everyday, mercantile life. *Soll und Haben* is a glorification of German commercialism: the bales and coffee-sacks of the house of T. O. Schröter in Hamburg outweigh the ancient prestige of the barons of Rothsattel. There is something of the democratic spirit which "Young Germany" had imported from France, in this elevation of the middle-class at the nobility's expense, but Freytag does not obtrude his social doctrines. He holds the balance equal by introducing, as the real hero of the novel, Fritz von Fink, a young nobleman whose nobility has been rejuvenated in the wilds of the New World. Through honest handiwork and commercial activity, Fink, who is a finer, less shallow Konrad Bolz, saves the house of Rothsattel and ultimately marries the Baron's daughter, Lenore, while Anton Wohlfahrt, the humbler representative of the commercial spirit, ends as brother-in-law of the wealthy Hamburg merchant. The charm of *Soll und Haben* — and in this respect Freytag had learned from Dickens—lies in its genial humour; the kindly spirit in which the book is written conceals its often narrowly provincial outlook on life, and the want of individuality, especially in its female characters. Lastly—and not the least of its merits—*Soll und Haben* is one of the most skilfully constructed of all German novels.

Die verlorene Handschrift, 1864.

In Freytag's next book, *Die verlorene Handschrift* (1864), the easy-going provincialism of his art is more obtrusive; or, it may be that it is here less in place than in the commercial novel. *Die verlorene Handschrift* is not so spontaneous as *Soll und Haben;* its plot is, in comparison, artificial. Abandoning the *milieu* with which he was familiar, the author introduces conflicts which demanded a finer poetic insight than he had at his command. As long, for instance, as Freytag is describing Professor Werner's search for a lost manuscript of Tacitus, he is completely successful, but when his hero comes into contact with aristocratic circles, and a prince falls in love with Ilse, the professor's wife, the story ceases to be convincing. In the end, the birth of a child consoles the professor for the manuscript he cannot find, and brings the novel to a conventional end.

Bilder aus der deutschen Vergangenheit, 1859-62.

Between 1859 and 1862, Freytag published a series of *Bilder aus der deutschen Vergangenheit* (5 vols.), in which he brought the past history of the German people home to his contemporaries. Although the admirable scenes of the Polish revolt in *Soll und Haben* gave a foretaste of Freytag's ability vividly to describe historical events, his homely humour and easy-going realism were, in general, not well adapted to make him a trustworthy exponent of history. The "spiessbürgerliche" element in Freytag's art disappeared, however, almost completely in these character-sketches of the great men who built up Germany's past. Historical events and personages are, it is true, now seen with sterner, more strictly realistic eyes than Freytag's, but his warm sympathy popularised his subject where the labours of more faithful historians were ineffective. Upon the *Bilder der deutschen Vergangenheit* was based the cycle of romances, *Die Ahnen*, which opened, in 1872, with *Ingo und Ingraban*, two novels of German national life in the fourth and eighth centuries. They were followed, in 1874, by *Das Nest der Zaunkönige*, the scene of which is laid at the beginning of the eleventh century; in 1875, by *Die Brüder vom deutschen Hause* (thirteenth century). A year afterwards came *Marcus König*, a story of the Reformation period; and in 1878, *Die Geschwister*, two stories illustrating respectively the Thirty Years' War and the beginning of the eighteenth century. The series was closed in 1880 with *Aus einer kleinen Stadt*, a story which culminates in the Revolution of 1848. When the enormous magnitude of the task which Freytag here set himself is considered—that of following the "Kulturgeschichte" of his nation from its beginnings down to the nineteenth century—it is not surprising that the value of the series should be unequal. None of the novels of *Die Ahnen* can be compared with *Soll und Haben*, or even *Die verlorene Handschrift;* the earlier stories are marred by that professorial didacticism which, as a consequence of the impoverished condition of German letters at the middle of the century, spread over the historical novel, and when the cycle reached a period with which Freytag was more familiar, "die Kraft und die Freude an der Arbeit," which he had hoped would accompany him to the end, would seem to have forsaken him. His early interest

Die Ahnen, 1872-80.

in the scheme visibly abated, and on finding a journalist set up as the last link in the evolution of a German family, we are reminded that the author himself had sprung from the *milieu* of "Young Germany."

F. Spielhagen, born 1829.

A more militant representative of the social novel in Germany was Friedrich Spielhagen,[1] who, all his life, had stood "auf den Zinnen der Partei." Spielhagen was born at Magdeburg in 1829, and passed his youth on the shores of the Baltic; he turned to literature in 1857, and in 1862, settled permanently in Berlin. He is Gutzkow's direct successor in fiction, and, like his master, employs the novel in the service of ideas; his books are all, more or less, "Tendenzromane." But it is only necessary to read one of Spielhagen's masterpieces after such a novel as *Ritter vom Geiste*, to realise that, in spite of his didacticism, he is a truer artist than his predecessor. Spielhagen had written two short stories, *Clara Vere* (1857) and *Auf der Düne* (1858), before he became famous with *Problematische Naturen* (1860), a continuation of which, *Durch Nacht zum Licht*, appeared two years afterwards. "Es gibt problematische Naturen," wrote Goethe in one of his *Sprüche in Prosa*,[2] "welche keiner Lage gewachsen sind, in der sie sich befinden, und denen keine genug thut. Daraus entsteht der ungeheure Widerstreit, der das Leben ohne Genuss verzehrt;" and these words were more applicable to the generation of unpractical dreamers who, at the middle of the century, had set their hopes on the Revolution, than to Goethe's contemporaries. Spielhagen was thus writing from the heart of his time, when he made Oswald Stein, the hero of his novel, a "problematic nature"; and this Stein, who begins life as a tutor in the family of a Pomeranian nobleman, and ends fighting on the barricades in 1848—who is drawn opposite ways by democratic ideals of state and society, on the one hand, and by the distractions of social life on the other—is still, after forty years, a comparatively modern figure. As an antidote to the constant strife with existence, in which such problematic natures are involved, Spielhagen offered the advanced political liberalism of his time, the belief in "the

Problematische Naturen, 1860.

[1] *Ausgewählte Romane*, 22 vols., Leipzig, 1895. Cp. G. Karpeles, *F. Spielhagen*, Leipzig, 1888.

[2] Goethe's *Nachgelassene Werke*, Stuttgart, 1833, 9, 49. Cp. chap. 33 of the novel.

solidarity of all human interests." Dr Braun, the representative of this liberalism, expresses the author's standpoint :—

"Wer die Solidarität aller menschlichen Interessen—das oberste Princip aller politischen und moralischen Weisheit—begriffen hat, weiss auch, das seine individuelle Existenz nur ein Tropfen in dem ungeheuren Strome ist und dass diese Tropfen-Existenz weder das Recht noch die Möglichkeit der absoluten Selbständigkeit hat. Wenn die Menschen wie reife Früchte vom Baume fielen, möchte es schon eher gehen. So aber, wo wir von einer Mutter mit Schmerzen geboren werden, um Jahre lang die hülflosesten aller Geschöpfe zu sein . . . wo wir später jeden wahren Genuss, jedes Fest der Seele nur mit Anderen geniessen und feiern können—da dürfen wir uns denn auch nicht länger sträuben, zu sein, was wir wirklich sind : Menschensöhne, Kinder dieser Erde, mit dem Recht und der Pflicht, uns hier auf diesem unseren Erbe auszuleben nach allen Kräften, mit der anderen Menschensöhnen, unseren Brüdern, die mit uns gleiche Rechte und freilich auch gleiche Pflichten haben." [1]

In Reih' und Glied, 1866.

In 1864, Spielhagen wrote *Die von Hohenstein*, and in 1866, another powerful romance, *In Reih' und Glied*. This, again, is a novel with a purpose; in the background are schemes for the improvement of the working-classes, socialistic dreams, and invectives against capital. The story ends tragically; the ideal of a society marching forward "in rank and file" is not realised, and the hero, who was modelled on Ferdinand Lassalle, is ultimately killed, like his prototype, in a duel. Hardly less interesting was Spielhagen's next work, *Hammer und Amboss* (1869), but then came a long series of romances, none of which reached the level of his early masterpieces : only once again, in *Sturmflut* (1876), did Spielhagen write a novel worthy of comparison with *Problematische Naturen*. In *Sturmflut*, the financial crises which took place in Berlin after the Franco-German war are brought into a grandiose, although somewhat forced, connection with a storm on the Baltic coasts. In 1879, appeared a story of Pomerania, *Platt Land*, in 1880, *Quisisana*, in 1881, *Angela*, and in 1888, *Noblesse oblige*, a historical novel, the scene of which is laid in Hamburg. Spielhagen's more recent romances have failed to meet with the approval of the younger generation,[2] but he has always retained their sympathy by his friendly attitude towards the literary movements of the day. Occasionally, however, in spite of their author's old-fashioned *technique*,

Sturmflut, 1876.

[1] *Durch Nacht zum Licht*, chap. 1 (*Ausgewählte Romane*, 5, 15).
[2] See, for example, H. and J. Hart, *Kritische Waffengänge*, 6, Leipzig, 1884.

books like *Faustulus* (1897) and *Freigeboren* (1900) rise to the level of *Problematische Naturen*.

The historical novel.

In the historical novel, Alexis had virtually no successors; even the names of such novelists as Heinrich König (1790-1869) and Georg Hesekiel (1819-74) are now forgotten. In 1878, however, Theodor Fontane (1819-98), whose *Gedichte* (1851) and *Balladen* (1861) contain some terse and vigorous ballad-poetry, published *Vor dem Sturm*, a romance of the "Befreiungskrieg," which was faithful to the best traditions of Alexis. Fontane also wrote many volumes of travel (*Aus England*, 1860; *Wanderungen durch die Mark Brandenburg*, 1862-81) and vivid accounts of his experiences as war-correspondent (*Der deutsche Krieg von* 1866, 1869-71; *Kriegsgefangen*, 1871), but a history of German literature is chiefly concerned with his novels of modern life, which will be discussed in a subsequent chapter. An exotic element was introduced into German fiction from America by Karl Anton Postl, a native of Moravia, who wrote under the pseudonym of Charles Sealsfield (1793-1864),[1] and whose sketches and novels of American life—notably the romance *Der Virey und die Aristokraten* (1834), the scene of which is laid in Mexico, in 1811—have never met with the recognition they deserve. Another novelist who wrote about America was Friedrich Gerstäcker (1816-72), but, like Sealsfield's, Gerstäcker's voluminous writings have fallen into a neglect that is difficult to account for. A similar fate has, with more justice, befallen the novels and plays of F. W. von Hackländer (1816-77).

T. Fontane, 1819-98.

C. Sealsfield, 1793-1864.

The antiquarian novel.

A less healthy development of modern German fiction is to be seen in the antiquarian novels of Ebers, Dahn and Hausrath. For the Romantic delight in the past, which the older school of historical novelists learned from Scott, these writers substituted historical accuracy and learned detail; a didactic spirit takes the place of imagination and poetry. Georg Ebers (1837-98),[2] Professor of Egyptology in Leipzig, wrote, in 1864, a novel of ancient Egyptian life, *Eine ägyptische Königstochter* (1864), and followed it up by a large number of romances on similar themes; but, with the possible exception of *Homo sum* (1878), Ebers' works are little more than conventional, senti-

[1] *Gesammelte Werke*, 3rd ed., 15 vols., Stuttgart, 1845-46. Cp. A. B. Faust, *C. Sealsfield*, Weimar, 1897.

[2] *Gesammelte Werke*, 25 vols., Stuttgart, 1893-95.

mental stories in an antiquarian setting. Felix Dahn (born 1834),[1] whose scholarly studies in German antiquity (*Die Könige der Germanen*, 1861-72) have undisputed value, is also more historian than novelist. The most popular of his many novels, *Ein Kampf um Rom* (1876), the subject of which is the Gothic invasion of the Roman Empire, is, apart from its graphic descriptions, a sensational story of small poetic worth. Lastly, Adolf Hausrath (born 1837), a theologian who writes under the pseudonym of George Taylor, is the author of the widely read historical novels, *Antinous* (1880), *Klytia* (1883), and *Elfriede* (1885).

G. Keller, 1819-90.

Gottfried Keller,[2] the master-novelist of this age, and, without question, its most original literary personality, was a Swiss. Keller, who was born at Zurich, on July 19, 1819, first set his heart on becoming an artist; he spent two years in Munich studying painting, only to find that he had mistaken his calling. Resolving to begin life over again, he attended, in 1848, the University of Heidelberg, where a friendship with Hermann Hettner (1821-82), the art-historian and author of a valuable *Literaturgeschichte des achtzehnten Jahrhunderts* (1856-70), helped him to discover wherein his talent lay. From Heidelberg, Keller went to Berlin, where, in the years 1850 to 1855, he seriously turned his attention to authorship. *Gedichte* he had already published in 1846, but they received little notice; five years later, however, appeared a collection of *Neuere Gedichte* (1851), which contained some of the most original lyric poetry of the time. In Berlin, too, Keller wrote his first prose work, a romance, *Der grüne Heinrich* (1854-55), which is, in great part, his autobiography. Heinrich Lee, a native of Zurich, who is brought up by his mother, is pressed by circumstances into the career which Keller himself had chosen as a young man; he goes to Munich in order to study art—and into this meagre story are woven reminiscences and episodes from the author's childhood. *Der grüne Heinrich* is thus a history of Heinrich's apprenticeship to life, his struggles, temptations and dreams, up to the point where, growing courageous enough to face the truth, that he has missed his vocation, he returns to his native land and becomes re-

Der grüne Heinrich, 1854-55.

[1] *Gesammelte dichterische Werke*, 21 vols., 2nd ed., Leipzig, 1900.

[2] *Gesammelte Werke*, 10 vols., Berlin, 1889-90. Cp. J. Bächtold, *Gottfried Kellers Leben*, 3 vols., Berlin, 1893-98, O. Brahm, *Gottfried Keller*, Leipzig, 1883, and F. Baldensperger, *G. Keller, sa vie et ses œuvres*, Paris, 1899.

conciled to a humbler career. But, so far from being merely a realistic account of its hero's life, *Der grüne Heinrich* is rich in poetic beauties; it might even be described as a Romantic novel, a *Heinrich von Ofterdingen*, in a nineteenth-century setting, and appealing directly to the modern reader. *Der grüne Heinrich* has, it is true, many of the faults of the Romantic novels: it shows, in particular, little regard for form, but this is more than atoned for by its intimately personal character. It is the last of the great novels which stand in the main line of development of German national fiction; in other words, the type of novel which began with *Agathon* and *Wilhelm Meister*, and passed through the hands of the Romanticists — from *Franz Sternbald* to *Maler Nolten* — seems to have reached a close with *Der grüne Heinrich.*

Die Leute von Seldwyla, 1856-74.

In the last years of his stay in Berlin, Keller also wrote a volume of short stories, to which he gave the title, *Die Leute von Seldwyla* (1856). General attention was not, however, attracted to this collection until the appearance, in 1874, of a new edition containing many additional "Novellen."

"Seldwyla," says the author in his introduction, "bedeutet nach der älteren Sprache einen wonnigen und sonnigen Ort, und so ist auch in der That die kleine Stadt dieses Namens gelegen irgendwo in der Schweiz. Sie steckt noch in den gleichen alten Ringmauern und Thürmen, wie vor dreihundert Jahren, und ist also immer das gleiche Nest; die ursprüngliche tiefe Absicht dieser Anlage wird durch den Umstand erhärtet, dass die Gründer der Stadt dieselbe eine gute halbe Stunde von einem schiffbaren Flusse angepflanzt, zum deutlichen Zeichen, dass nichts daraus werden solle. Aber schön ist sie gelegen, mitten in grünen Bergen, die nach der Mittagseite zu offen sind, so dass wohl die Sonne herein kann, aber kein rauhes Lüftchen. Deswegen gedeiht auch ein ziemlich guter Wein rings um die alte Stadtmauer, während höher hinauf an den Bergen unabsehbare Waldungen sich hinziehen, welche das Vermögen der Stadt ausmachen; denn dies ist das Wahrzeichen und sonderbare Schicksal derselben, dass die Gemeinde reich ist und die Bürgerschaft arm, und zwar so, dass kein Mensch zu Seldwyla etwas hat und niemand weiss, wovon sie seit Jahrhunderten eigentlich leben. Und sie leben sehr lustig und guter Dinge, halten die Gemüthlichkeit für ihre besondere Kunst und wenn sie irgendwo hinkommen, wo man anderes Holz brennt, so kritisieren sie zuerst die dortige Gemüthlichkeit und meinen, ihnen thue es doch niemand zuvor in dieser Hantierung."[1]

[1] *Gesammelte Werke*, 4, 7 f.

A fine example of Keller's work is the story in the first series of *Die Leute von Seldwyla*, entitled *Romeo und Julia auf dem Dorfe*. Two peasants disagree over the boundary-line between their fields, and the quarrel grows until it ultimately becomes a family feud. Sali and Vrenchen, the Romeo and Juliet of this rustic tragedy, whose union is rendered impossible by the enmity of the parents, resolve to have a last happy day together: they dance to their heart's content at a village festival, and next morning, at dawn, throw themselves into the river. The episode is, in itself, commonplace, but Keller has encircled it with a wonderful halo of poetry. Unobtrusively and with unconscious art, he unfolds his story from the opening scene where the peasants are ploughing their respective fields, to the catastrophe on the river; the reader who finds himself at first interested and amused by Keller's genial touches of humour, is suddenly confronted by a tragedy, the more stupendous because related without sentimentality or artificial pathos. And if we turn to *Die drei gerechten Kammmacher* in the same volume, or to *Kleider machen Leute* in the second series of *Die Leute von Seldwyla*, we find it difficult to say whether Keller was greater as a writer of comedy or of tragedy.

In 1855, Keller returned to Switzerland, and in 1861, was appointed "erster Staatsschreiber" of the canton of Zurich, a position which—to the detriment, it is to be feared, of his literary work—he occupied for fifteen years. In 1876, he retired, and died at Zurich, in 1890. *Sieben Legenden*, a collection of Novellen in which the lives of certain saints are related with naïve ingenuousness and poetic charm, appeared in 1872, and in 1878, the magnificent cycle of *Züricher Novellen*. In the last-mentioned collection is to be found the story of the Minnesinger, Johann Hadlaub, also *Das Fähnlein der sieben Aufrechten*, a humorous picture of Swiss political life in the early part of the century, and, most masterly and characteristic of all Keller's works, *Der Landvogt von Greifensee*. In the course of 1879 and 1880, Keller revised *Der grüne Heinrich*, endeavoured to improve its defects of form, and made the denouement less tragic. *Das Sinngedicht*, another volume of Novellen, which are threaded together on a common theme, the choice of a wife, was published in 1882, an edition of his *Gesammelte*

Züricher Novellen 1878.

Das Sinngedicht, 1881.

Gedichte in 1883. Finally *Martin Salander*, a prosaic and uninspired novel of modern Swiss life, closed the series of his works in 1886.

Gottfried Keller is the master of the "Novelle"; he is the greatest writer of short stories in a literature which is extraordinarily rich in this form of prose fiction. At the same time, it is not easy to say, in a few words, wherein the peculiar merit of Keller's work lies. His subjects, as in the case of *Romeo und Julia auf dem Dorfe*, are often only anecdotes, or else have grown naturally out of anecdotes; and, as far as artistic form is concerned, Keller is surpassed by at least two of his contemporaries, Paul Heyse, at his best, and C. F. Meyer. It is rather his method of writing that is unique; he possesses, in a higher degree than any other prose author of modern Europe, an epic style; he is a supreme example of what Schiller called a "naïve" genius. As a probable result of his early training as a painter, all that Keller relates or describes takes visible form before his eyes; his language, in other words, is instinctively plastic and concrete. A master of style, as Meyer and Nietzsche are masters, Keller is not, but his prose is the complete expression of his individuality; it is strong and healthy, and reflects the sturdy independence of his native land. During his lifetime, Keller was but little read outside Germany, and he was an old man before he attained a widespread recognition even in German-speaking lands. In his writings, as in his character, there was a certain exuberance of strength that repelled a public accustomed to the more conventional manner of his contemporaries; it was left to a later generation to discover in him the representative German novelist of the century, and the truest exponent of the German spirit.

While Keller in the South of Germany formed a link between Romanticism and modern literature, another master of the short story kept the connection unbroken in the North. Theodor W. Storm[1] was born in 1817, at Husum on the coast of Schleswig, and throughout his life he remained a warm patriot of that province. His career was uneventful. He occupied various posts in the service of

T. Storm, 1817-88.

[1] *Gesammelte Werke*, 10 vols., Brunswick, 1899. Cp. P. Schütze, *T. Storm, sein Leben und seine Dichtung*, Berlin, 1887, and E. Schmidt, *Charakteristiken*, 1, Berlin, 1886, 437 ff.

the State, and was finally appointed Landvogt and Amtsrichter in his native town. In 1880, he retired to Hademarschen in Holstein, where he died in 1888. Less pronounced in his individuality than Keller, Storm stood wholly in the shadow of the Romantic traditions; he took over many of the weaker elements in the literature of his predecessors; and thus, unlike Keller's, the majority of his "Novellen" already begin to show signs of age. The key to Storm's prose work is his lyric poetry. Like his model, Eichendorff, he was, in the first instance, a poet, and his *Gedichte* (1853) give him a high place among German singers. A love of home and all its associations, an intense if somewhat melancholy delight in looking back upon the years of youth, and, above all, a delicacy of perception, are the chief characteristics of Storm's poetry. And these features, too, are to be traced in his prose works. He loves the novel of reminiscence, and all his finest "Novellen" are stories of a past happiness that lies irrevocably behind the narrator, and is seen through a veil of resignation. Storm's earlier "Novellen," such as *Im Sonnenschein* (1854), *Ein grünes Blatt* (1855), and, best known of all, *Immensee* (1852), are purely Romantic in tone and spirit; but, as he grew older, his style changed. The passive, retrospective novel gave place to a more active and dramatic form of romance. To this group belong *Psyche* (1877), a story in imitation of Paul Heyse, *Aquis submersus* (1877), which is perhaps his masterpiece, and *Renate* (1878). A number of these novels are classed together as "Chroniknovellen," and include, besides *Aquis submersus* and *Renate*, *Eekenhof* (1880), *Zur Chronik von Grieshuus* (1884), and *Ein Fest auf Haderslevhuus* (1886); they are written in an archaic style, and preserve, with considerable faithfulness, the character of old chronicles. In the last years of his life, Storm wrote stories on more realistic lines, such as *John Riew'* (1886), *Der Schimmelreiter* (1888), but his art was too romantic, readily to adapt itself to modern problems.

"Novellen."

Women writers.

The fiction of this period was, to a large extent, written by women, eminent among whom were Fanny Lewald (1811-89) and Gräfin Ida Hahn-Hahn (1805-80). Both grew up under the influence of the Young German School, but, while the former never lost touch with that coterie, the Gräfin Hahn-

Hahn early turned away from it and, in 1850, became a Catholic. An aristocrat herself, the Gräfin Hahn-Hahn loved to depict aristocrats of mind and feeling, strong passionate natures, who fall victims to the tyranny of circumstance. Her most characteristic novels were collected in 1844, under the title *Aus der Gesellschaft* (12 vols.) The novels of Ottilie von Wildermuth (1817-77), a Swabian writer, do not rise above the provincial interests of her home, but to Luise von François (1817-93) we owe *Die letzte Reckenburgerin* (1871), one of the outstanding German romances of the time.

W. Jordan, born 1819.

Still another side of German literature in the period between 1848 and 1870 is to be seen in the work of Wilhelm Jordan, who was born at Insterburg in the same year as Keller. Independent and original, a writer of undeniable poetic imagination, Jordan has suffered under the mediocrity and intellectual poverty of his time. He had already written philosophical poems before the Revolution of 1848, and *Demiurgos* (1852-54), his first epic, is essentially didactic in tone; the materialistic philosophy, which men like Büchner had introduced from England, here reappears in all its prosaic baldness. Jordan's chief work is *Die Nibelunge*, an epic, which was published in two parts, *Sigfridssage* and *Hildebrands Heimkehr* in 1868 and 1874. Owing to its strongly marked patriotic "Tendenz," the epic at once met with success, and the poet himself wandered from town to town, reciting it like a medieval "Spielmann." *Die Nibelunge* is written in alliterative verse, and contains here and there passages which recall the grandiose simplicity of the Germanic "Heldendichtung." But Jordan's effects are too calculated to make good poetry, and *Die Nibelunge* is marred, even more than *Demiurgos*, by lapses of taste and arid stretches of unpoetic philosophy, which a genuinely creative imagination would have avoided. As a dramatist (*Durchs Ohr*, 1870) and a novelist (*Die Sebalds*, 1885), he has kept in traditional grooves. More effectually than Jordan, Karl Simrock (1802-76), a patient student of Germany's past, who spent the greater part of his busy life translating the masterpieces of the Middle High German epic, has helped to make the modern generation familiar with the figures of medieval literature.

Die Nibelunge, 1869-72.

K. Simrock, 1802-76.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE MUNICH GROUP. HISTORY AND CRITICISM.

Previous to the inroads of realism from France, the German literature of the second half of the nineteenth century was strangely free from schools or coteries. This in itself was a proof that the vitality of German poetry—and, north of the Alps, vitality of this kind is almost always accompanied by a display of party spirit—was at a low ebb. In the epoch before the Franco-German war, only one group of writers existed to whom the word "school" may be applied, namely, the poets whom the Bavarian king, Maximilian II., gathered round him in Munich, between 1850 and 1860. As, however, almost all the men of this circle were North Germans, it cannot be said that they formed a Bavarian school comparable to the Swabian school of the preceding generation; nor were the members bound as closely by common principles as Uhland and his friends had been. The general tendency of the group was towards conservativism; they raised a bulwark against the unrestrained aspirations of the age, held up an ideal of literary form to a generation that was chiefly interested in ideas, and inaugurated that movement which, later on, was to make so stubborn a stand against the naturalistic tendencies of the last quarter of the century. Thus, the importance of the Munich poets was mainly negative, and with the possible exception of half-a-dozen stories by Paul Heyse, they left nothing that is signally great. Leaders in an age of mediocrity, they infused no fresh life into German literature, but they prevented it from sinking below a certain level of excellence.

E. Geibel, 1815-84.

Emanuel Geibel, whose work has already been discussed, was called to Munich by the King of Bavaria in 1851, and at once became the head of the coterie; and, as we have

seen, the years which he spent in Munich were the most productive of his career. In 1861, he published a *Münchner Dichterbuch*, a belated "Musenalmanach," which served as a bond of union for the members of the group. Geibel gave the tone to the Munich lyric as represented by Heyse and Greif; his epic ballads had on Scheffel's work a greater influence than even Kinkel's epics, and his undramatic plays were the models for the many iambic tragedies that were performed in the Bavarian national theatre.

A. F. von Schack, 1815-94.

The house of Graf Adolf Friedrich von Schack[1] (1815-94), a native of Mecklenburg, who came to Munich in 1855, was the chief centre of literary life in the Bavarian capital. Schack's original productions — he wrote two novels and several plays — do not display much talent. His verses, however (*Gedichte*, 1867), occasionally strike an individual note, and his *Nächte des Orients* (1874), a philosophic poem, in which he laid down his own personal creed, contains poetry of some merit. Schack was an inveterate traveller and loved strange literatures; his translations, the *Heldensagen des Firdusi* (1851) as well as those from the Spanish and Portuguese, are more successful than his original work. He also wrote, it may be noted, an excellent *Geschichte der dramatischen Litteratur und Kunst in Spanien* (1845-46). Schack played a larger *rôle* as an art-patron than as a man of letters, and his unsurpassable collection of modern German pictures, now known as the Schack Gallery, will keep his name alive when his writings are forgotten.

F. Bodenstedt, 1819-92.

After Geibel, the most widely read lyric poet of the circle was Friedrich Bodenstedt (1819-92),[2] who, in 1851, published his *Lieder des Mirza Schaffy*, a volume of oriental poetry, or rather imitations of oriental poetry. Bodenstedt was the last poet who, following in Rückert's footsteps, imitated the *West-östliche Divan*; but he had not Rückert's genius, and it is now difficult to understand what made the *Lieder des Mirza Schaffy* the most popular book of poetry of its time. Although there is little genuine lyric inspiration in Bodenstedt's verse, he had at his command an easy flow of language, and he had sufficiently immersed himself in the

1 *Gesammelte Werke*, 2nd ed., 8 vols., Stuttgart, 1891.

2 *Gesammelte Schriften*, 12 vols. (incomplete), Berlin, 1865-69; the *Lieder des Mirza Schaffy* are at present in their 152nd edition.

oriental spirit—he spent several years in the East—to adapt it to his ideas. His readers, who did not question the genuineness of his oriental colouring, delighted to discover familiar maxims and truisms beneath the strange disguise in which he clothed them. The success of this work was fatal to Bodenstedt; he remained all his life the "poet of *Mirza Schaffy*"; his dramas and his graphically written books of travel were little read. Like all the poets of his generation, he was also a translator, and made admirable versions of Russian poets as well as of Shakespeare.

H. Leuthold, 1827-79.

Other poets who stood in more or less close relationship to Geibel were Julius Grosse (1828-1902), whose work has few lasting qualities, Heinrich Leuthold (1827-79), and Hermann Lingg (born 1820). Of these Leuthold was unquestionably the most gifted; but his life was unhappy and tragic, and he ultimately went insane. Both in his *Gedichte* (1879)[1] and in the epic, *Penthesilea*,—which, however, like Lenau's epics, is essentially lyric in tone and style,—Leuthold towers high above his friends. Hermann Lingg (born 1820), on the other hand, corresponds more closely to the ideal poet at which the Munich school aimed; he was "discovered" by Geibel, who drew attention to his first collection of *Gedichte* in 1853. As a poet, Lingg has undoubted ability, but, writing in an age in which originality was little prized, he was tempted to produce too much. His ambitious epic in *ottave rime*, *Die Völkerwanderung* (1866-68), notwithstanding poetic swing and beauty of language, fails to bring order and concentration into so vast a theme; and his dramas are also without clearly marked outlines. He has written little in prose—a handful of historical "Novellen"—but they are wholly deficient in the plastic qualities to be found in the novels of a master like C. F. Meyer. Similar to Lingg's is the talent of Martin Greif (pseudonym for Hermann Frey, born 1839).[2] Greif's lyrics (*Gedichte*, 1st ed., 1868) are strongly influenced by the Romantic traditions, and his compass is narrow, but he has written a number of vigorous songs in the tone of the Volkslied. His dramas—all of them on historical subjects—have, on the other hand, few dramatic qualities, and are written without adequate knowledge of the

H. Lingg, born 1820.

M. Greif, born 1839.

[1] Edited by J. Baechtold, 3rd ed., Frauenfeld, 1884.
[2] *Gesammelte Werke*, 3 vols., Leipzig, 1895-96.

stage. Although not personally connected with the Munich group, Otto Roquette (1824-96) was a writer whose many-sided activity—lyrics, tales in verse and prose, dramas, literary criticism—bears a close resemblance to theirs. But just as Bodenstedt is associated with *Mirza Schaffy*, so Roquette is now chiefly remembered as the author of *Waldmeisters Brautfahrt*, a charming Märchen, which appeared in 1851, and has gone through more than sixty editions.

O. Roquette, 1824-96.

Like Bodenstedt, Joseph Viktor von Scheffel (1826-86)[1] was the victim of his popularity. His epic, *Der Trompeter von Säkkingen*, which was written in Italy and published in 1854, was one of the most widely read books of its day, and is generally regarded as the embodiment of Scheffel's poetic work. It is a fresh, unrestrained poem, interspersed with lyrics, and written in the sentimental style which was the least valuable heritage of Romanticism; its poetic beauties lie on the surface, and its humour is of that superficial kind that makes no claims on the imagination. The secret of Scheffel's charm was his spontaneousness; he did not pay strict observance to the *technique* of the epic, nor did he hamper himself by following acknowledged models. And the result was, not perhaps an epic of abiding worth, but at least a poem that expressed exactly the easily satisfied tastes and ideals of his time. A historical romance, *Ekkehard, eine Geschichte aus dem zehnten Jahrhundert* (1857), stands upon a higher plane. Scheffel made a careful study of the age when the monastery of St Gall was a solitary light in intellectual darkness; he also helped to edit the *Waltharilied*. *Ekkehard*, the hero of which is the young monk who wrote the *Waltharilied*, is an excellent historical novel of its kind, but, in justice to Scheffel's predecessors, the fact cannot be overlooked that he was deficient in the poetic seriousness of Scott, or of a disciple of Scott like W. Alexis; nor, on the other hand, does *Ekkehard* fulfil those essentially modern requirements, according to which sentimentality and romantic, not to say "Young German," trivialities, should be excluded from a picture of a bygone age. But it is an interesting story, and, compared with the attempts of Ebers and Dahn to rehabilitate the historical novel on antiquarian lines, a master-

J. V. von Scheffel, 1826-86.

Ekkehard, 1857.

[1] Cp. J. Proelss, *Scheffels Leben und Dichten*, Berlin, 1887. A collected edition of Scheffel's works has not yet appeared.

piece. Less important were Scheffel's historical "Novellen," *Hugideo* (published 1884), a story of the fifth century, and *Juniperus, Geschichte eines Kreuzfahrers* (1868). *Frau Aventiure, Lieder aus Heinrich von Ofterdingens Zeit* (1863), although also anachronistic in its sentiment, contains some of Scheffel's finest lyrics. *Gaudeamus* (1867), again, offers but a poor equivalent for the classical German drinking-song, and, in general, the poet's "beer-humour" and his parodies, which, in their day, won great applause, are without literary significance. Scheffel was not formally called to Munich by the Bavarian king, but he lived there for several years, in intimate touch with members of the group, as well as in Italy with Paul Heyse. His books were published at widely distant dates, but most of them were written between 1850 and 1860.

Scheffel's successors.

Scheffel has had many imitators. The contentment with easily won success, and the want of serious poetic ideals, which in him were a grave source of weakness, are to be found accentuated in his followers. Of these the chief is Julius Wolff (born 1834), the author of a large number of sentimental romances in verse, such as *Der Rattenfänger von Hameln* (1875), *Der wilde Jäger* (1877), and *Tannhäuser* (1880). Rudolf Baumbach (born 1840), again, is a poet of more individuality than Wolff, and his humour is less trivial than Scheffel's. An enthusiastic mountaineer, Baumbach loves Alpine sagas, and such a saga forms the subject of *Zlatorog* (1877), his best known poem, while his lyrics (*Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen*, 1878-80) re-echo the sentimental tone of Scheffel's songs.

F. W. Weber, 1813-94.

A Westphalian Catholic, F. W. Weber (1813-94), wrote, in 1878, an epic, *Dreizehnlinden*, the enormous popularity of which was chiefly due to its religious tendency. But Weber was a manly and independent poet, and not unworthy of comparison—in his *Gedichte* (1881), rather than in his epic—with his great countrywoman, Annette von Droste-Hülshoff. A refined poetic talent, no less sterling because expended, for the most part, on translations, is that of Wilhelm Hertz (1835-1902), who was one of the original contributors to Geibel's *Dichterbuch*. Hertz continued the work Karl Simrock had begun; with a rare power of entering into the thoughts and feelings of the Middle High German poets, he translated both Gottfried's *Tristan* (1877) and Wolfram's *Parzival* (1898).

W. Hertz, 1835-1902.

Pessimism.

The most serious vein in the literature of this age was a pessimistic one. About 1850, as we have seen, Arthur Schopenhauer came into his kingdom in German intellectual life; and, from 1850 until the last decade of the century, his philosophy was a dominating force. Neo-Kantism and positivism, it is true, soon began to shake the supremacy of his system, but, in some form, pessimism long remained the inspiration of literature and art. In 1869, Eduard von Hartmann (born 1834) published his *Philosophie des Unbewussten*—a work which, as regards popularity, might be compared with the writings of the "Popularphilosophen" in the eighteenth century—and won new friends for Schopenhauer's ideas by bringing them into harmony with Hegelian idealism. Literature generally—even when it was most joyous and apparently careless—could not avoid a pessimistic tinge; the humour of the Munich poets was, in its lack of sincerity, only a cloak for inward hopelessness. During these decades, pessimism found a characteristic expression in the *Gedichte* (1870) of a Moravian, Heinrich Landesmann, who writes under the pseudonym of Hieronymus Lorm (born 1821). Early deprived of the sense of hearing, subsequently, also of sight, Lorm was more justified than his fellow-poets in seeing the dark side of things, and a note of despair dominates all his poetry. Heinrich Leuthold, whose work has already been mentioned, belongs also to this group, and a bitter cynicism inspires the epic, *Der neue Tanhäuser* (1869), by E. Grisebach (born 1845). Another sombre poet is Leuthold's fellow-countryman, Ferdinand von Schmid (1823-88), known to literature as "Dranmor."[1] The exotic elements in Schmid's poetry are to be traced to the fact that he passed the latter part of his life in South America.

H. Lorm, born 1821.

F. von Schmid ("Dranmor"), 1823-88.

Pessimistic, too, are the writings of one of the leading poets of this time, an Austrian, Robert Hamerling (1830-89),[2] although in Hamerling's poetry the conflict had already begun between pessimism and a more buoyant outlook on life. When, in 1857, Hamerling published his first collection of poems, his *Sangesgruss vom Strande der Adria*, he was professor in a school at Trieste; in 1866, the income from his

R. Hamerling, 1830-89.

[1] *Gesammelte Dichtungen*, 3rd ed., Berlin, 1879.

[2] *Werke*, edited by M. M. Rabenlechner, 4 vols., 2nd ed., Hamburg, 1901. Cp. M. M. Rabenlechner, *Hamerlings Leben und Werke*, Hamburg, 1897.

writings allowed him to give up teaching, whereupon he made Graz his home. His earlier poems, the *Sangesgruss*, *Venus in Exil* (1858), *Ein Schwanenlied der Romantik* (1862), have a certain rhythmic charm which, however, hardly makes up for the poverty of the thoughts expressed. In 1866, and in 1869, Hamerling published the two epics on which his reputation rests, *Ahasver in Rom* and *Der König von Sion*, both of which found enthusiastic admirers. It is questionable, however, whether he has here succeeded in solving the problem as to what form the modern epic should take; or even, whether he has justified its existence in modern literature. The subject of *Ahasver in Rom*, the Wandering Jew, is one that has fascinated many poets, and Hamerling has at least given it an original setting. He has chosen the epoch during which Christianity was encroaching upon paganism, and has brought Ahasuerus face to face with Nero, amidst the luxury of the Roman Empire; the brilliant colouring of his scenes recalls the pictures of his fellow-countryman, Hans Makart, but the personages and events are depicted with a theatrical striving after effect, which makes it difficult to believe in the poet's artistic sincerity. Like so many Austrians, Hamerling was unable to express all that he would have liked to say; his ambitions outstripped his power to realise them, and thus fine ideas—the identification of the Wandering Jew with Cain, for instance—which are full of possibilities, remain undeveloped. His grandiose scenes do not bring conviction with them, and his pathos is too often merely sounding rhetoric. The same breach between conception and execution is to be observed in the second epic, *Der König von Sion*, the subject of which is the rising of the Anabaptists in Münster, in 1534. Here, however, a more realistic method than in *Ahasver* was not only possible but necessary, and brought a wholesome restraint to bear on Hamerling's imagination. *Der König von Sion* was followed by another epic, *Amor und Psyche* (1882), and by a satirical poem on modern life, *Homunculus* (1888). Hamerling also experimented as a dramatist, but *Danton und Robespierre* (1871) is only a prose epic in dramatic form; while a philosophic novel, *Aspasia* (1876), might be compared with one of Wieland's Greek romances, remodelled in the style of the modern antiquarian novel.

Ahasver in Rom, 1866.

Der König von Sion, 1869.

The writer of the Munich group who has had the most

permanent influence upon his generation, is Paul Heyse.[1] That Heyse, who was born in Berlin in 1830, should have chosen the Romance languages for study at the university, is characteristic of his peculiar cast of mind: he is what Wieland was in the eighteenth century, an upholder of Romance rather than Germanic ideals in literature. In 1852, Heyse spent a year in Italy, which finally decided his tastes; he had, however, before this published a tragedy, *Francesca da Rimini* (1850), and a couple of stories in verse, and, in 1854, King Maximilian invited him to Munich, which, since then, has remained his home. Although Heyse is essentially a novelist, he has also written over thirty dramas, which have only exceptionally been successful on the stage. The reason of his failure as a dramatist is not unfamiliarity with the requirements of the theatre, but the fact that at the time when most of his plays were written, the drama was still emancipating itself from the classic traditions, and had not adapted itself to modern requirements. At the same time, plays such as *Hans Lange* (1866) and *Colberg* (1868)—to mention only two—are masterpieces of their kind. As a lyric poet,[2] Heyse has also never been esteemed as he deserves, while his versions of modern Italian poets—especially of Giusti (1875) and Leopardi (1878)—stand on a level with Rückert's oriental translations.

P. Heyse, born 1830.

Dramas.

The first volume of Heyse's *Novellen*, which appeared in 1855, contained *L'Arrabbiata*, a masterly story of Italian life, which he has perhaps never surpassed. Since this date, he has published many volumes of short stories — *Meraner Novellen* (1864), *Moralische Novellen* (1869 and 1878), *Troubadour-Novellen* (1882), to mention only a few characteristic collections — which display unfailing variety and originality of invention. The charm of Heyse's stories is essentially one of outward form: with an art that is rare in German literature, he moulds and proportions his plots. His sense of beauty, whether physical beauty or that of character, is extremely delicate; and although he is fond of depicting strong passions and piquant psychological problems, the laws of artistic form

Novellen.

[1] *Gesammelte Werke*, 29 vols., Berlin, 1897-1901. Cp. Heyse's own *Jugenderinnerungen und Bekenntnisse*, Berlin, 1900, O. Kraus, *P. Heyses Novellen und Romane*, Frankfort, 1888, and G. Brandes, *Samlede Skrifter*, 7, Copenhagen, 1901, 314 ff.

[2] Cp. especially his *Neue Gedichte und Jugendlieder*, Berlin, 1897.

are never violated. Thus, with the genius of a sculptor or a painter, Heyse has given the German "Novelle" a grace and elegance which one looks for in vain in other writers of the time; but sometimes these Romance qualities are bought at the sacrifice of that Germanic depth and sincerity which make Keller and Storm great. Heyse's art, like all Romance art, is objective; and his attention is often too much taken up with external harmony to attend to inward truth. His style, which it was formerly the custom to compare with Goethe's, is superficially clever rather than simple and sincere. Heyse is at his best in those Novellen which describe Italian life; his Italian women, with their intense feelings and luxuriant beauty, are drawn with perfect objectivity and consequently are truest to nature. His German characters, on the other hand, are influenced by the literary traditions of the Young German School, and, in the majority of cases, are either brilliantly witty or metaphysical and sentimental.

The sense of form and proportion which, in the short story, stood Heyse in such good stead, forsook him when he wrote novels on a larger scale; the wide canvas which he selected for works like *Kinder der Welt* (1873) and *Im Paradiese* (1876) afforded him more space than he had power to utilise for the development of his figures. But the former of these is, like Spielhagen's *Sturmflut*, one of the representative novels of its epoch; the passionate conflict between the "children of the world" and the "children of God," which, in 1872, was called forth by Strauss's *Der alte und der neue Glaube*, is here fought out, while pessimism and the rise of social democracy stand in the background of the story. In spite of defective construction and a conventional plot, *Kinder der Welt* consequently gives an excellent idea of the condition of Germany at the beginning of the new empire. *Im Paradiese* is a novel of artist life in Munich, which Heyse describes in interesting detail, but the basis of the story is inferior to that of its predecessor. *Der Roman der Stiftsdame* (1886), a masterly study of character, is more of an extended "Novelle" than a "Roman": while *Merlin* (1892) and *Über allen Gipfeln* (1895) are "Tendenz" novels directed against the modern spirit in German literature.

Kinder der Welt, 1873.

After Heyse, the most talented writer of short stories in

the Munich circle was W. H. Riehl (1823-97), whose *Kulturgeschichtliche Novellen* appeared in 1856; while Hans Hopfen (born 1835) shows in his vigorous realistic novels more sympathy than any of his friends with modern ideals. Adolf Wilbrandt and Wilhelm Jensen (both born 1837) are two North Germans whose work bears many points of resemblance to that of the Munich School. The former, a native of Rostock, is distinguished both as dramatist and novelist. His comedies, the most ambitious of which is *Die Maler* (1872), are marred by a failing of his time, an inability to regard literature with the seriousness of the artist. A classical tragedy, *Arria und Messalina* (1874), stands far behind *Der Meister von Palmyra* (1889), although the latter drama is too heavily weighted with metaphysical ideas for the purposes of the stage. Wilbrandt, however, is less of a dramatist than a novelist. *Adams Söhne*, which appeared in 1890, was followed, in 1892, by *Hermann Ifinger*, a novel of artist-life in Munich, *Die Osterinsel* (1895), *Die Rothenburger* (1895), and *Hildegard Mahlmann* (1897)—all books which treat of themes of absorbing interest to the author's contemporaries. In some of his early stories, such as *Die braune Erica* (1868), Wilhelm Jensen gave promise of rivalling Storm, but his many long novels are wholly deficient in concentration.

W. H. Riehl, 1823-97.

A. Wilbrandt, born 1837.

W. Jensen, born 1837.

The most eminent humourist of this period was Wilhelm Raabe (born 1831),[1] whose charming idyll, *Die Chronik der Sperlingsgasse* (1857), first made him generally known. Of his many stories, the most characteristic are *Der Hungerpastor* (1864), *Abu Telfan* (1867), and *Der Schüdderump* (1870). Raabe has points of resemblance to Jean Paul, whom he follows often too faithfully; the construction of his novels is naively artificial, and their style old-fashioned. Like Jean Paul, too, Raabe obtrudes his personality on the reader; but he has little of his master's optimistic faith in humanity, his humour being in many cases only a cloak for irony. Other humourists of this age are Wilhelm Busch (born 1832), whose *Max und Moritz* (1865), *Der heilige Antonius* (1870), and *Die fromme Helene* (1871) have become household books, and Heinrich Seidel (born 1842), the author of *Leberecht Hühnchen* (1882).

Humourists.

[1] Cp. P. Gerber, *W. Raabe*, Leipzig, 1897.

The period during which the Munich School dominated German literature was, although the least literary of the century, one of marked activity in other fields; it was the era in which Germany, under Bismarck, gradually fought her way into the front rank of European nations. Neither before nor immediately after the Franco-German war were the conditions favourable to literature, the attention of the nation being engrossed by other interests. The political changes reacted, however, favourably on the science of history, which, since 1848, had been steadily widening its circle of students in Germany. The master of the science, Leopold von Ranke (1795-1886), whose most famous work, *Die römischen Päpste, ihre Kirche und ihr Staat im* 16. *und* 17. *Jahrhundert*, appeared as far back as 1834-36, was still alive, and, in 1881, began the publication of his crowning work, a *Weltgeschichte*, which he was able to carry on as far as the ninth volume (1881-88). Amongst Ranke's most eminent disciples were G. Waitz (1813-86), W. Giesebrecht (1814-89), and Heinrich von Sybel (1817-95)—Sybel's *Die Begründung des deutschen Reichs durch Wilhelm I.* (1889-94) is one of the prominent works of this period—while J. G. Droysen (1808-84), another of the older historians, had more in common with Niebuhr than with Ranke. The monumental *Römische Geschichte* by Theodor Mommsen (born 1817) appeared, it has also to be noted, in 1854-56. Above all, two men exerted a stimulating and furthering influence on the younger generation—Jakob Burckhardt (1818-97), a native of Basle, whose *Die Kultur der Renaissance in Italien* (1860) is one of the masterpieces of German scholarship, and Heinrich von Treitschke (1834-96). Treitschke's *Deutsche Geschichte im neunzehnten Jahrhundert* (1879-94) — which, however, does not extend beyond the Revolution of 1848 — forms, to a larger extent than any other single work, the groundwork for the intellectual life of Germany subsequent to the war with France.

History.

Literary criticism during this period was less vigorous and healthy than political history. In 1870, it is true, Hermann Hettner (1821-82) completed his *Literaturgeschichte des achtzehnten Jahrhunderts*, already mentioned, and Rudolf Haym (1821-1901) his *Romantische Schule*, both literary histories of the first order; but, unlike France, Germany possessed no criticism whose mission it was to lead rather than be led by

Criticism.

the literature of the day. The only eminent German critic in this sense of the word was Karl Hillebrand (1829-84), who lived long both in France and England, and whose collected essays appeared in seven volumes under the title *Zeiten, Völker und Menschen* (1874-85). In the universities, philological methods of literary research gradually gave way to a more æsthetic and organic study of literature—a change to some extent due to the increased attention paid to Goethe. Works like Herman Grimm's (1828-1901) lectures on *Goethe* (1876), the *Geschichte der deutschen Litteratur* (1883) by Wilhelm Scherer (1841-86), and Erich Schmidt's (born 1853) *Lessing* (1884-92) show the academic study of literature at its best. And from Scherer's school—he was professor in the University of Berlin from 1877 to his death—has gone out the most vital movement in modern German criticism.

CHAPTER XV.

FROM 1870 TO 1890; RICHARD WAGNER.

RECENT literature in Germany, in so far as it rests on a national basis at all, has been inspired by the unification of the German people. The victorious issue of the war with France in 1870-71 left virtually no impression on poetry; the lyric, for instance, that was called forth by the war—Geibel's *Heroldsrufe* (1872) is a typical example—is not to be compared with the patriotic songs of 1813. Thus, until a new generation grew up as citizens of the German Empire—a generation alive to new national responsibilities—literature remained in the hands of older writers and continued to run in traditional grooves. In 1876, however, occurred what must be regarded as the first national achievement of the united German nation, namely, the production at Bayreuth of Wagner's trilogy, *Der Ring des Nibelungen*. To appreciate the significance of Wagner's work for the development of the modern German drama, we must trace his career at some length.

R. Wagner, 1813-83.

Wilhelm Richard Wagner[1] was born at Leipzig on May 22, 1813. As a child, he showed a precocious talent for music and a strong love for the theatre; his own early dramatic attempts were accompanied by music. He devoted himself zealously to the study of this art, and, while musical director in Würzburg, Magdeburg, Königsberg, and Riga, wrote the operas *Die Feen* (1833), *Das Liebesverbot* (1834), and *Rienzi* (1842). In the last of these, which is based on

Rienzi, 1842.

[1] *Gesammelte Schriften und Dichtungen*, 10 vols., 2nd ed., Leipzig, 1887-88. Cp. C. F. Glasenapp, *Das Leben Richard Wagners*, 1, 2, 3rd ed., Leipzig, 1894-99; F. Muncker, *Richard Wagner, eine Skizze seines Lebens und Wirkens*, 5th ed., Bamberg, 1891; and H. Lichtenberger, *R. Wagner, poète et penseur*, Paris, 1898.

Bulwer Lytton's romance, Wagner directly challenged comparison with the masters of historical or "grand" opera, Spontini and Meyerbeer. The chief hope of success for a dramatic composer at this time was to win the approval of Paris, and in 1839, Wagner gave up his position in Riga and made virtually the same voyage that Herder had made seventy years before. In Paris, where Wagner arrived in summer, he met with little encouragement; he was obliged to write for his bread, and, amidst poverty and privation, he produced the essays and "Novellen" collected under the title *Ein deutscher Musiker in Paris* (1840-41). In Paris, too, he composed *Der fliegende Holländer* (1843), the first of his dramas which was at variance with the conventional opera.

Der fliegende Holländer, 1843.

In April, 1842, Wagner left Paris, and, during the ensuing winter, both *Rienzi* and *Der fliegende Holländer* were performed at Dresden under his own direction. Meanwhile he was engaged on *Tannhäuser und der Sängerkrieg auf Wartburg* (1845) and *Lohengrin* (1850), works in which he gradually freed himself from the traditional form of opera. In *Tannhäuser*, as also in *Der fliegende Holländer*, a woman's love is invested with a mystic power of redemption; in all three operas, the powers of light are, in characteristically Romantic fashion, opposed to the powers of darkness or evil. *Tannhäuser* is a skilful combination of two sagas, that of Ritter Tannhäuser, who has visited the subterranean realms of the Venusberg, and that of the famous "singing-contest" between the great poets of Middle High German literature in the castle of the Wartburg.[1] *Lohengrin*, dramatically more complicated, also contains a wider range of scenes and characters. The dark figures of Ortrud and Friedrich von Telramund stand in the shadow of heathendom; Lohengrin, the Knight of the Swan, and Elsa von Brabant, whose good name the knight defends, are representatives of medieval Christianity, while reminiscences from the saga of the Nibelungen give the poem an air of archaic solemnity.

Tannhäuser, 1845.

Lohengrin, 1850.

In 1849, Wagner was implicated in a revolutionary movement at Dresden, and, to escape prosecution, was obliged to flee. He made Switzerland his home and here wrote three treatises which contain the theoretical principles of his art, *Die Kunst und die Revolution* (1849), *Das Kunstwerk der Zukunft*

Theoretical writings.

[1] See above, pp. 158 f. and 162 f.

(1850), and *Oper und Drama* (1851). In these prose writings, Wagner expressed clearly and definitely what the theorists of the preceding generation had blindly groped after. Since Herder's time, the regeneration of the "music-drama"—which, under Italian influence, had lost its claim to be regarded as a form of literary art—had been discussed by German writers on æsthetics, and several of them had speculated on the possibility of reviving a form of art similar to the tragedy of the Greeks. The foundation on which Wagner based his theories was not new; he only insisted that now, as in ancient Greece, music should be an aid to the interpretation of the drama, and not, as in the Italian opera, an end in itself; the national German drama, he claimed, must, like that of the Greeks, be a composite art, in which poetry and music, acting and decorative art, all lent their assistance to the representation of a dramatic action of national interest.

To the year of the Revolution, 1848, and to the years succeeding, belong the sketches of four dramas, *Friedrich der Rothbart*, *Siegfrieds Tod*, *Jesus von Nazareth*, and *Wieland der Schmiedt;* but, with the exception of *Siegfrieds Tod*, these plans were not carried out. Soon, however, the myth of the Nibelungen, which Wagner had mastered thoroughly before writing his drama on Siegfried, wholly engrossed his attention, and in 1853, the trilogy, *Der Ring des Nibelungen*, was completed. *Der Ring des Nibelungen* is an essentially modern drama, reflecting the spirit and aspirations of its epoch; it is the poetic expression of a philosophy closely allied to Schopenhauer's, of which, however, Wagner knew nothing till 1854. With a finer dramatic instinct than Hebbel, who, as we have seen, had dramatised the Middle High German epic in his *Nibelungen*, Wagner saw that for the modern poet, the possibilities of the subject lay, not in the German *Nibelungenlied*, a poem of a definite historical epoch, but in the primitive saga as preserved in the *Edda*. And, as in *Tannhäuser* he had successfully combined two originally unconnected sagas, so here he united the Scandinavian *Volsungasaga* to that of the Rhinelander Siegfried, and gave the whole a mythological background.

Der Ring des Nibelungen, 1853.

The trilogy is preceded by a "Vorabend," *Das Rheingold*, which tells how Alberich the Nibelung obtains possession of the treasure that lies sunk in the Rhine, the gold which

Das Rheingold.

makes its owner master of the world. But, as the Rhine daughters sing—

> "Nur wer der Minne
> Macht versagt,
> nur wer der Liebe
> Lust verjagt,
> nur der erzielt sich den Zauber,
> zum Reif zu zwingen das Gold." [1]

Alberich welds the all-powerful ring. Meanwhile, the giants, having built Walhalla, demand from the gods the promised reward—the goddess Freia. In her place, they are persuaded to accept the Nibelungenhort, which Wotan, with the help of Loge's cunning, wrests from Alberich; and, on every one who obtains possession of the ring, the latter pronounces the curse of death. The first drama of the trilogy, *Die Walküre*, is based on the *Volsungasaga*. Siegmund the Volsung, having succeeded in drawing from the ash-tree in Hunding's house the sword which Wotan had once plunged into it, is seized with a passionate love for Hunding's wife, Sieglinde, who is, at the same time, his own sister. The death of Siegmund at Hunding's hands, which Wotan may not avert, his daughter, the Walküre, Brünnhilde, tries in vain to prevent, and her father punishes her for her intervention by putting her to sleep on a mountain summit, surrounded by a ring of fire. In the second drama, *Siegfried*, the young hero, the son of Siegmund and Sieglinde, and brought up by the dwarf Mime, kills Fafner, the dragon, and wins the hoard and ring. Guided by a bird, he comes to the mountain where Brünnhilde lies sleeping, fights his way through the flames and awakens her. *Götterdämmerung*, which is based on the drama *Siegfrieds Tod*, written by Wagner in 1848, is the fullest and most varied drama of the trilogy; the destinies of generations, of the gods themselves, are involved in the tragedy of Siegfried and Brünnhilde. Leaving the fire-girt mountain, Siegfried arrives at the castle of Gunther on the Rhine; the wily Nibelung, Hagen, who wishes to see Gunther wed to Brünnhilde, suggests that Siegfried's memory be destroyed by a potion. Siegfried, disguised in the Tarnhelm, once more braves the fire and, as in the German *Nibelungenlied*, wins Brünnhilde for Gunther. He himself marries Gunther's

Die Walküre.

Siegfried.

Götterdämmerung.

[1] *Schriften und Dichtungen*, 5, 211.

sister, Gudrun, who thus plays the part of Kriemhild in the epic. The murder of Siegfried by Hagen at Brünnhilde's instigation takes place in the third act of the tragedy; the body is brought home and laid out upon the funeral pyre, and Brünnhilde throws herself into the flames. Thus comes to an end the race of the Volsungs, which Wotan had originally created to save the world from the power of the self-seeking Nibelungs. But by Siegfried's death and by Brünnhilde's love for him, the might and the curse of the ring are alike destroyed; the end of the gods, which Wotan has foreseen, approaches, and, in her last words, Brünnhilde greets the dawn of a new age:—

"Verging wie Hauch
der Götter Geschlecht,
lass' ohne Walter
die Welt ich zurück:
meines heiligsten Wissens Hort
weis' ich der Welt nun zu.—
Nicht Gut, nicht Gold,
noch göttliche Pracht;
nicht Haus, nicht Hof,
noch herrischer Prunk;
nicht trüber Verträge
trügender Bund,
noch heuchelnder Sitte
hartes Gesetz:
selig in Lust und Leid
lässt—die Liebe nur sein."[1]

The musical composition of *Der Ring des Nibelungen*, which was printed in 1853, but not published until 1863, occupied Wagner with interruptions from 1853 to 1870. *Das Rheingold* and *Die Walküre* were performed at Munich, in 1869 and 1870, but the first representation of the trilogy as a whole took place in the summer of 1876, in the "Festspielhaus" at Bayreuth, which Wagner had erected under almost insuperable difficulties. Long before this, however, he had produced two other master-works, the tragedy of *Tristan und Isolde* (1865), which, like *Der Ring des Nibelungen*, is mainly written in alliterative verse-forms, and the comedy of *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* (1868). *Tristan und Isolde*, from a poetic standpoint Wagner's finest drama, was a result of his enthusiastic study of Schopenhauer's writings; it is the poetic expression of that thinker's philosophy.

The Bayreuth Festspiele, 1876.

Tristan und Isolde, 1865.

[1] *Schriften und Dichtungen*, 6, 254 f.

Here, with a masterly hand, Wagner has made a drama out of the loose narrative of Gottfried's epic, substituting dramatic conciseness for epic breadth. The first act passes on Tristan's ship on the voyage from Ireland to Cornwall, and Brangäne substitutes the love potion for the poison which Isolde orders her to put into the wine. Nothing is left, as in the epic, to chance, and, while according to Gottfried, the potion is the cause of all the evil, in Wagner's tragedy it is but symbolic of the love which already has both Tristan and Isolde in its grasp. Alone in the garden, the lovers realise that the only solution to their all-devouring passion is the perfect union of death. They are discovered by King Marke, and in the third act, Tristan dies in the presence of Isolde, who has crossed the sea to bring him healing.

Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg, 1868.

For his drama *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*, Wagner borrowed some suggestions from *Hans Sachs* (1829), a comedy by an Austrian playwright J. L. Deinhardstein (1794-1859), which had already been utilised for an opera by Albert Lortzing. But the idea round which Wagner's plot turns, that of a young knight gaining admittance to the guild of Meistersingers, and winning the daughter of a burgher for his wife, is exclusively his own. The figure of Hans Sachs himself—in Deinhardstein's drama Hans Sachs was a young man—is Wagner's most genial character, and one of the finest figures in German comedy. At the same time, *Die Meistersinger* is essentially a subjective work; for, in writing it, the poet had obviously his own artistic ideals and trials in view: Sixtus Beckmesser, the malicious "Stadtschreiber" of Nürnberg, is a satirical caricature of the critics and pedants against whom, all his life long, Wagner was obliged to fight. *Die Meistersinger* was Wagner's enthusiastic tribute to German national art; the Romantic doctrine, "dass die Kunst mit dem Volke gehen muss," here appears in a new form; the "deutschen Meister," the burghers who represent the genius of the Volk, form the true bulwark of German art.

> 'Zerfällt erst deutsches Volk und Reich,
> in falscher wälscher Majestät
> kein Fürst bald mehr sein Volk versteht;
> und wälschen Dunst mit wälschem Tand
> sie pflanzen uns in's deutsche Land.
> Was deutsch und ächt wüsst' Keiner mehr,
> lebt's nicht in deutscher Meister Ehr'.

Drum sag' ich euch
ehrt eure deutschen Meister,
dann bannt ihr gute Geister!
Und gebt ihr ihrem Wirken Gunst,
zerging' in Dunst
das heil'ge röm'sche Reich,
uns bliebe gleich
die heil'ge deutsche Kunst!"[1]

Parsifal, 1882.

Wagner wrote one other drama, *Parsifal* (1882), in which, with consummate constructive power, he blended the saga, as he found it in Wolfram's poem, with motives from the *Alexanderlied*—the "flower maidens" who tempt Parsifal—and from the later Arthurian epic. Out of these traditional materials he created a poem which, in its calm beauty and religious earnestness, is not inferior to the best parts of *Tristan* or *Die Meistersinger*. *Parsifal* represents the last stage of that spiritual evolution in Wagner's thought, which had begun with *Tannhäuser*. He was still a pessimist, but, like his master Schopenhauer, he went back to the fatalism of the East and the oriental Nirvana; the spirit of *Parsifal* is a transfigured pessimism. But the age was rapidly advancing; the German nation was rising full of renewed energy, and the religious mysticism of *Parsifal* did not awaken the same enthusiasm among the younger generation, as the *Nibelungen Ring* and *Tristan* had done some years previously. In less than a year after the production of *Parsifal* at Bayreuth, on February 13, 1883, Wagner died in Venice.

The "Meininger."

Wagner has so completely overshadowed the music drama that even still the latter lies under his ban. The German theatre, on the other hand, benefited enormously by the example of Bayreuth, and, about the same time, the Court Theatre of Meiningen began to employ in the spoken drama those artistic principles which guided Wagner's reforms, namely, attention to detail, the repression of the individual actor, the subordination of parts to the whole—above all, it aimed at unity of style. Thus, not from Berlin or Munich, but from the little towns of Bayreuth and Meiningen, spread the reforms which, within a few years, advanced the German theatre to the leading position in Europe as an artistic institution. The "Meininger" had been mainly dependent upon the classical drama for their materials, but

[1] *Schriften*, 7, 270 f.

they also brought into notice such dramatists as Albert Lindner (1831-88), author of *Brutus und Collatinus* (1866) and *Die Bluthochzeit* (1871), and Arthur Fitger (born 1840): *Die Hexe* (1875), by the latter, is a powerful tragedy of religious doubt, but marred by too pronounced a "Tendenz." In addition to these writers, the chief dramatists of this period were Heinrich Kruse (1815-1902), who, however, had but little talent for the stage, Adolf Wilbrandt (born 1837), and Paul Lindau (born 1839) — Lindau's once popular social plays (*Ein Erfolg*, 1874; *Gräfin Lea*, 1879) are imitations of French models, and have small literary value. The favourite pieces of the day were written by playwrights like G. von Moser (born 1829), A. L'Arronge (born 1838), F. von Schönthan (born 1849), and O. Blumenthal (born 1852), who remained faithful to the well-worn traditions of Benedix. The "Meininger," however, helped to make known a writer whose work was a factor of some importance in the later dramatic movement, namely, Ernst von Wildenbruch (born in 1845). Wildenbruch, who first attracted notice by epics on the Franco-German war, has also written several volumes of Novellen, but his talent is essentially dramatic, and he is the author of a long series of plays, mostly on historical themes. *Die Karolinger* (1881) and *Das neue Gebot* (1886) brought the historical drama again into honour; while *Die Quitzows* (1888) met with a success which was unequalled by any of Wildenbruch's later dramas from Prussian history, such as *Der Generalfeldoberst* (1889) or *Der neue Herr* (1891). With a double tragedy, *Heinrich und Heinrichs Geschlecht* (the Emperor Heinrich IV., 1896), and a drama of Reformation times, *Die Tochter des Erasmus* (1900), he has again awakened the enthusiasm which his earlier plays called forth. But the good qualities of his work lie on the surface; while effective on the stage and noisily patriotic, it is deficient in the attributes of true dramatic poetry.[1]

Minor dramatists.

E. von Wildenbruch, born 1845.

Previous to 1889, the North German drama gave little or no signs of vitality. In the meantime, however, in Austria, where the succession of dramatic poets has always been less broken than in Germany, a dramatist had arisen who, besides a knowledge of the stage, had an unmistakably poetic talent.

[1] Cp. H. Bulthaupt, *Dramaturgie des Schauspiels*, 4, Leipzig, 1901, 205 ff.

L. Anzengruber, 1839-89.

Ludwig Anzengruber (1839-89),[1] a native of Vienna, is the most gifted German dramatist who has written his chief works in dialect, and no writer since Fritz Reuter has given such faithful pictures of peasant life. In Anzengruber's novels, as well as in his plays, may be observed what was virtually a new attitude towards the province: the peasant is no longer idealised, as in the village stories of the first half of the century, but is described as he actually is. Anzengruber was thus, in some respects, a pioneer of the realistic movement which, a decade later, set in in German literature. After years of extreme privation, as a strolling actor in the Austrian provinces, he wrote *Der Pfarrer von Kirchfeld* (1870), which at last brought him into notice. The popularity of this drama—it is still frequently played—was, however, due rather to the interest in questions of religious doubts and tolerance, which the repeal of the "Concordat" in Austria and the "Kulturkampf" in Germany had awakened, than to inherent poetic qualities. But Anzengruber's next work, *Der Meineidbauer* (1871), both in plot and character-drawing a masterpiece, made it clear that his peculiar forte lay in the depiction of peasant-life, and this play was followed by *Die Kreuzelschreiber* (1872), *Der G'wissenswurm* (1874), *Doppelselbstmord* (1876), and *Das Jungferngift* (1878). These powerful and absorbing dramas have not yet been appreciated as they deserve to be, and the fact that they are, for the most part, written in an Austrian dialect has excluded them from North German theatres; only *Das vierte Gebot* (1878), indeed, an impressive tragedy of Viennese life, can be said to be really popular outside Austria. In addition to this, Anzengruber's realism was tempered by few concessions to popular taste; unless to some extent in *Der Pfarrer von Kirchfeld*, he never merely transferred, as his predecessors had done, a modern social drama to a *milieu* in which dialect is spoken. Whatever his peasants are, they are, at least, genuine types: they neither philosophise like the favourite heroes of the older "Dorfgeschichte," nor do they express literary ideas. Anzengruber is, above all, consistent; his plays and stories often seem trivial, naïve, even sentimental; but these characteristics are

[1] *Gesammelte Werke*, 10 vols., 3rd ed., Stuttgart, 1898. Cp. A. Bettelheim, *Ludwig Anzengruber*, 2nd ed., Dresden, 1898, and S. Friedmann, *L. Anzengruber*, Leipzig, 1902.

part of the life he reproduces. The excellence of his art lies in his realism, in his power of endowing the life of the peasant with a tragic destiny, of raising petty joys and sorrows to the realm of high comedy or tragedy. Anzengruber is the most striking dramatic talent that modern Austria has produced, and the continued vitality of the Austrian theatre is due to him and not to poets like Franz Nissel (1831-93), who were content to imitate Grillparzer. Nissel, whose masterly tragedy, *Agnes von Meran*, won the Schiller Prize in 1878, spent an even more unhappy life than Anzengruber; his work brought with it no inward satisfaction to compensate for the want of popular success.

F. Nissel, 1831-93.

Between 1870 and 1885, the short story, or "Novelle," was the most healthy form of German literature; it showed much more promise than the novel, which still remained in the hands of writers whose reputations had been made previous to the war. The master of the German Novelle in this age, as in the preceding one, was a Swiss. Conrad Ferdinand Meyer (1825-98)[1] was a native of Zurich, and turned to literature comparatively late in life; before 1870, he had published only one small volume of *Gedichte* (1864). Meyer was long uncertain whether to write in French or German, but, his sympathies being with Germany, he ultimately decided for the latter tongue. In 1871, he wrote a fine epic, *Huttens letzte Tage*, and, in 1872, followed it up by *Engelberg*, a poetic idyll. The first of his novels, *Jürg Jenatsch* (1876), the hero of which played an important *rôle* in Graubünden during the Thirty Years' War, is a masterpiece of historical fiction; and *Der Heilige* (1880), a novel on Thomas à Becket, is not inferior to it. The range of historical subjects congenial to Meyer's taste was, however, restricted; he was only at his ease when describing an age of great personalities like that of the Renaissance. His aristocratic mind was in close sympathy with the commanding geniuses of such an epoch, and his own nature responded to the polish and scholarly wit of the humanists. The same perfect workmanship characterises all the novels that followed *Der Heilige*, namely, *Das Amulet*, *Der Schuss von der Kanzel*, *Plautus im Nonnenkloster*, *Gustav Adolfs Page* (all published together in 1883), *Das Leiden eines Knaben* (1883),

The short story.

C. F. Meyer, 1825-98.

[1] Cp. A. Frey, *C. F. Meyer*, Stuttgart, 1900.

Die Hochzeit des Mönchs (1884), *Die Richterin* (1885), *Die Versuchung des Pescara* (1887), and *Angela Borgia* (1890). Meyer is pre-eminently the artist among modern German novelists; his style is polished and finely balanced; his scenes are delineated with infinite care, and his subjects always have a certain inner harmony with the spirit of the author's own time. Of the essentially "naïve" genius of his countryman, Keller, he had nothing, nor had he the latter's purely German humour; the qualities in which he excels are, as in the case of Heyse, those peculiar to Romance literatures—beauty of style and form. Like Keller and Heyse, Meyer was also a lyric poet, but, as may be inferred from his prose, he turned with preference to the ballad; his verse is dramatic rather than lyric; the inner warmth and the power of giving himself up to moods and feelings are denied him.

F. von Saar, born 1833.

While Meyer is not, and never will be, a popular novelist, like Storm or Keller, his contemporary, Ferdinand von Saar,[1] who was born at Vienna in 1833, has a still smaller circle of admirers. Saar has written poetic tragedies—*Heinrich IV.* (two parts, 1865-67)—but without success; he was not a dramatist who could adapt himself to the requirements of the stage. As a lyric poet, Saar is one of the most delicately organised of living German writers; a singer, whose favourite note is renunciation, no one expresses better than he the resigned mood of modern Austria (*Wiener Elegien*, 1893). As a novelist, his art is, even in comparison with Meyer's, narrow, his best work being contained in two small volumes of *Novellen aus Österreich* (1877-97). While Meyer rejoiced in strong, optimistic characters, Saar chooses to write of those who have been worsted in life; and the shadowy figures of his stories are invariably set in a sombre framework.

M. von Ebner-Eschenbach, born 1830.

A more widely known writer of short stories in Austria is Marie von Ebner-Eschenbach (born 1830),[2] who, like Saar, also began her career with ambitious dramas. These, however, attracted little attention, and it was 1875, before a story, *Ein Spätgeborener*, revealed the marked originality of Frau Ebner's talent. This book was followed, in 1876, by *Bozena*, a novel of some length, to which the Moravian scenery gave a special interest. A collection of *Erzählungen*, published in 1875, was

[1] Cp. J. Minor, *Ferdinand von Saar*, Vienna, 1898.
[2] *Gesammelte Werke* (6 vols. have appeared), Berlin, 1893 ff.

succeeded by a second in 1881; two volumes of *Dorf- und Schlossgeschichten* appeared in 1883 and 1886, and since then Frau von Ebner-Eschenbach has written many books, including longer novels, such as *Das Gemeindekind* (1887) and *Unsühnbar* (1890). Although not without understanding for recent tendencies in literature, she is more deeply indebted to her predecessors than to her contemporaries; she has learned from Heyse and even from Auerbach. Her talents are seen to best advantage in her witty and satirical sketches of Austrian aristocratic life, as, for example, in *Zwei Comtessen* (1885) and *Die Freiherren von Gemperlein* (1881). All her writings are characterised by an essentially Austrian lightness of touch, and that ability to express ideas epigrammatically, which lends piquancy to her collection of *Aphorismen* (1880).

Minor Austrian novelists.

The novel of provincial life was, at this period, cultivated to a larger extent in Austria than in Germany. Despite a preference for morbid psychological problems, Leopold von Sacher-Masoch (1835-95) wrote some powerful *Galizische Geschichten* (1876-81) and *Judengeschichten* (1878-81), and K. E. Franzos (born 1848) described a similar life in *Aus Halbasien* (1876) and *Die Juden von Barnow* (1877). Peter Rosegger, who was born in 1843, as the son of a Styrian peasant, is a disciple of Anzengruber. But without either his master's genius, or that discipline which disheartening failure brought to bear on Anzengruber's work, Rosegger has become a voluminous writer, whose natural talent has lost itself in didactic sentimentality. Among his most noteworthy books are *Die Schriften des Waldschulmeisters* (1875) and *Das ewige Licht* (1897).

T. Fontane, 1819-98.

The pioneer of the modern German novel was a North German, Theodor Fontane (1819-98),[1] who has already been mentioned as a follower of Willibald Alexis. A native of Neuruppin, Fontane identified himself with the Mark of Brandenburg, in the same way as Storm and Reuter identified themselves with Schleswig and Mecklenburg. Between his historical romances, *Vor dem Sturm* (1878) and *Schach von Wuthenow* (1883), Fontane wrote a number of Novellen (*Grete Minde*, 1880; *L'Adultera*, 1882), in which he gradually felt his way towards a realistic form of fiction. In 1887, *Irrungen, Wirrungen*, appeared and had an immediate and

[1] *Gesammelte Romane und Novellen*, 12 vols., Berlin, 1890-91.

marked influence on the methods of the German novel: for this work and *Stine* (1890), Fontane's models were Flaubert, the Goncourts, and Zola. Two stories, *Unwiederbringlich* (1891) and *Frau Jenny Treibel* (1892), which followed *Irrungen, Wirrungen*, did not mark much advance; but in 1895, Fontane published his masterpiece, *Effi Briest*. The poet who, in his old age, had learned a new style from the French realists, here employed it in describing the *milieu* of his North German home; the figures of his story, apart from their surroundings, are often shadowy and indistinct, and the plot is meagre, but the fine poetic spirit in which the whole is conceived, gives the novel a unique position in the fiction of the time. After *Effi Briest* appeared *Die Poggenpuhls* (1896) and *Der Stechlin* (1898), in which the charm of the author's style atones for the almost complete absence of incident. Fontane's personality—as reflected in the volumes of autobiography, *Meine Kinderjahre* (1893) and *Von Zwanzig bis Dreissig* (1898)—is the most interesting in recent German literature: he may be regarded as the typical example of the Berlin man of letters in the last quarter of the century.

Effi Briest, 1895.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE END OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

THE literary movement of which the work of the Munich school was a characteristic expression, culminated, as we have seen, in the opening of the "Festspielhaus" at Bayreuth, and the general acceptance of the Wagnerian drama. The passive resignation which inspired this literature was not, however, to the taste of the younger generation of writers, who had grown up in an era of national optimism; they demanded a more positive, self-assertive faith than was to be learned from Schopenhauer. The conflict against the collective spirit of Hegelianism, which had virtually been begun, before the middle of the century, by the Danish individualist, Sören Kierkegaard, and carried over into social fields, as early as 1845, by Max Stirner (pseudonym for Kaspar Schmidt, 1806-56), in his remarkable work, *Der Einzige und sein Eigenthum*,[1] came into the foreground of German intellectual life as the influence of Schopenhauer waned. This optimistic and individualistic reaction is first definitely and clearly set forth in the work of Friedrich Nietzsche, the most original thinker in the last period[2] of German intellectual evolution.

F. W. Nietzsche, 1844-1900

Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche[3] was born at Röcken near Lützen, on October 15, 1844, and educated at Schulpforta.

[1] Reprinted in Reclam's *Universal-Bibliothek*, No. 3057-60, Leipzig, 1893.

[2] For this period, cp., besides R. M. Meyer, *Die deutsche Litteratur des neunzehnten Jahrhunderts*, 2nd ed., Berlin, 1900; A. Bartels, *Die deutsche Dichtung der Gegenwart*, 2nd ed., Leipzig, 1901; and A. von Hanstein, *Das jüngste Deutschland*, 2nd ed., Leipzig, 1901.

[3] *Werke*, 8 vols., Leipzig, 1899; three volumes of *Nachgelassene Werke* have also appeared in this edition, Leipzig, 1901. Cp. E. Förster-Nietzsche, *Das Leben Nietzsches*, 1, 2, Leipzig, 1895-97; H. Lichtenberger, *La philosophie de Nietzsche*, Paris, 1898 (German translation, with an introduction by E. Förster-Nietzsche, Dresden, 1899), and T. Ziegler, *Friedrich Nietzsche*, Berlin, 1900.

At the universities of Bonn and Leipzig he studied classics, and so distinguished himself that he was appointed Professor of Classical Philology at Basle in 1869, before he had taken a degree. In 1879, illness, combined with mental overstrain, obliged him to resign his chair, and for the next ten years he led an unsettled life at Swiss health resorts and in Italy; in 1889, his mind gave way, and he died at Weimar, on August 25, 1900. Like every pioneer of a new period in thought or art, Nietzsche himself passed through the transition which lay between him and his predecessors: he began his career as a disciple of Schopenhauer and a warm friend and admirer of Richard Wagner. His first work, *Die Geburt der Tragödie aus dem Geiste der Musik* (1872), was not merely a revolt against uninspired and uninspiring philological methods and an attempt to solve, by philosophic intuition, the problem of dramatic origins; it was, at the same time, an apology for Wagner's art. In the four *Unzeitgemässen Betrachtungen* which followed (1873-76), Nietzsche appears as the declared antagonist of his time; he attacks the self-satisfied feelings with which the German people regarded themselves after the war, singling out David Friedrich Strauss as the representative of that complacency; he opposes with reformatory zeal the Hegelianism which still lay heavy on German philosophy, and, in the two final *Unzeitgemässen Betrachtungen*, points to Schopenhauer and Wagner, the men who had had the chief influence on his development, as the saviours of the age from "Bildungsphilistertum." Before, however, the last *Betrachtung* appeared, a gulf opened between himself and Wagner; Nietzsche's sensitive nature recoiled from the practical imperfections of the Bayreuth Festspiele and the vulgarity of their supporters. This was on the surface, but the origin of the schism lay deeper than either then realised; the two men held irreconcilable "Weltanschauungen"—Wagner, that pessimism which, for the greater part of the century, had dominated German culture, Nietzsche, a new individualistic, joyous optimism; and the admiration Nietzsche had felt for the triumphant heroism of a Siegfried, ceased before the resigned Christian mysticism of *Parsifal*. His antagonism to Wagner found its final, virulent and embittered expression in *Der Fall Wagner* and *Nietzsche contra Wagner*, two pamphlets written in 1888, on the eve of the philosopher's last illness.

Die Geburt der Tragödie, 1872.

Unzeitgemässe Betrachtungen, 1873-76.

Nietzsche and Wagner.

Other writings.

Having broken away from both Wagner and Schopenhauer, Nietzsche entered upon what has been called his second period, a stage of positivism to which belongs *Menschliches, Allzumenschliches: ein Buch für freie Geister* (1878-80), while *Morgenröthe: Gedanken über die moralischen Vorurtheile* (1881) and *Die fröhliche Wissenschaft* (1882) lead up to his chief book, *Also sprach Zarathustra: ein Buch für Alle und Keinen* (1883-91). *Jenseits von Gut und Böse, Vorspiel einer Philosophie der Zukunft* (1886), *Zur Genealogie der Moral: eine Streitschrift* (1887), and *Götzen-Dämmerung, oder wie man mit dem Hammer philosophirt* (1888), may be regarded as supplements to *Also sprach Zarathustra*. Ill-health prevented Nietzsche from finishing *Der Wille zur Macht: Versuch einer Umwerthung aller Werthe*, a work in which he proposed to gather up the threads of his philosophy and set forth his system. Only the first part, *Der Antichrist: Versuch einer Kritik des Christenthums*, reached completion (1888, published 1895).

Also sprach Zarathustra, 1883-91.

Also sprach Zarathustra—the book by which Nietzsche has especial claim to a place in literary history—is the most original prose work of its time. The Persian prophet, Zoroaster or Zarathustra, serves as a mouthpiece for the thinker's own philosophy, and this Zarathustra seeks refuge from the eternal recurrence of things—"Die Wiederkunft des Gleichen"—in the doctrine of a higher manhood than the world has yet known. *Also sprach Zarathustra* stands on the boundary between philosophy and poetry; it may or may not be what its author once proclaimed it, the "deepest" work of its time, but, from an artistic point of view, it is a wonderfully beautiful book; the fulness of its thought and its grandiose Biblical language make it one of the master-works of modern literature. No reader can be insensible to the beauty of passages like those on the "grosse Sehnsucht," or the following lines from "Von den sieben Siegeln":—

"Wenn ich dem Meere hold bin und allem, was Meeres-Art ist, und am holdesten noch, wenn es mir zornig widerspricht:
Wenn jene suchende Lust in mir ist, die nach Unentdecktem die Segel treibt, wenn eine Seefahrer-Lust in meiner Lust ist:
Wenn je mein Frohlocken rief: 'die Küste schwand—nun fiel mir die letzte Kette ab—
Das Grenzenlose braust um mich, weit hinaus glänzt mir Raum und Zeit, wohlan! wohlauf! altes Herz!'

Oh wie sollte ich nicht nach der Ewigkeit brünstig sein und nach dem hochzeitlichen Ring der Ringe—dem Ring der Wiederkunft?"[1]

Nietzsche's philosophy.

Nietzsche was a moral philosopher rather than a metaphysician; his works are practical sermons on the text, "Memento vivere." He goes back to the springs of life, to the natural man; he strips society of the dogmas and conventions that have gathered round it in the course of the ages, the artificial distinctions of good and evil, and regards, as its salvation, a return to the first principles of human nature, to the domination of the strong and the assertion of the individual. The social duty of the race is not to him, as it had seemed to his predecessors, to subordinate the individual to the herd, but to create heroes, great men. And the hero is the man with the strong will, the self-asserting genius, who has risen above the altruistic virtues of his weaker fellows—such is the "Übermensch." In this assertion of individualism, there is an echo of the Romantic revolt against the humanitarianism of the eighteenth century. Nietzsche himself is an illustration of his dogma of "die ewige Wiederkunft," and the parallel which has been drawn between his conception of the "Übermensch," and the hero-worship, evolved by Carlyle from the philosophy of Fichte, is not a wholly imaginary one. And it is not merely in the individualism of his philosophy that Nietzsche resembles the pioneers of Romanticism, nearly a hundred years before him. Like Friedrich Schlegel and Novalis, Nietzsche is a thinker in aphorisms; and, above all, he is an artist in the use of words. He discovered possibilities in the German language of which the classical masters of prose knew nothing; his rhythmic periods combine the dignity of Luther's language with the dithyrambic style of that kindred genius in the Romantic period—kindred not only in thought, but in the tragedy of his life—Friedrich Hölderlin. Nietzsche, whether for good or evil, introduced Romance qualities of clearness and terseness in German prose; it was his endeavour to free it from those elements which he described as "deutsch und schwer."

Nietzsche as a poet.

It is sometimes forgotten that Nietzsche was also a lyric poet, although his *Gedichte und Sprüche* (collected in 1897) contain a number of poems that rank with the best of the

[1] *Werke*, 6, 337.

time. Of all forms of contemporary literature, moreover, the lyric has drawn most immediate inspiration from this thinker. The chief poet of the epoch is the Prussian officer, Detlev von Liliencron, who was born in Kiel in 1844. Liliencron's *Adjutantenritte und andre Gedichte*, which appeared in 1883, is full of manly and vigorous verse, and contrasts markedly with the musical but superficial poetry of the Munich school. Among the younger writers, the most original and characteristic lyric poets are Gustav Falke (born 1853), F. Avenarius (born 1856), Arno Holz (born 1863), Richard Dehmel (born 1863), K. Henckell (born 1864), Franz Evers (born 1871), and Carl Busse (born 1872). More varied lyric tones are to be heard in the work of O. J. Bierbaum (born 1865), while the poetry of Stefan George (born 1868) would seem to point to a revival of Romantic mysticism and symbolism.[1] The epic, which stood so high in favour with the writers of the previous generation, has been almost entirely neglected by the poets who pride themselves on being "modern," *Das Lied der Menschheit* (1887 ff.), by the brothers Heinrich and Julius Hart (born 1855 and 1859), forming a solitary exception. *Robespierre* (1894), on the other hand, an ambitious epic by a Viennese poetess, Marie delle Grazie (born 1864), belongs essentially to the school of Hamerling.

The modern lyric.

D. von Liliencron, born 1844.

The epic.

The literary revival which set in in Germany during the last two decades of the century was, in great measure, a result of foreign influences, French, Russian, and Scandinavian naturalism having created the necessary conditions. Arno Holz, Johannes Schlaf (born 1862), and Karl Bleibtreu (born 1859) formulated the principles of a specifically German realism, and illustrated their theories by realistic lyrics, novels, and dramas. The drama benefited most immediately by the new movement, and, in the winter of 1889-90, the earliest plays of Sudermann and Hauptmann were produced in Berlin. Hermann Sudermann[2] is an East Prussian, and was born in 1857. As novelist and dramatist, he has, to a large extent, learned from French models; this is especially noticeable in his careful *milieu*-painting and his graceful and concrete style. The collection of "Novellen," *Im Zwielicht*

The realistic movement.

H. Sudermann, born 1857.

Novels.

[1] A selection of recent German lyrics is to be found in C. Busse's *Neuere deutsche Lyrik*, Leipzig, 1895 (new ed., Halle, 1901).

[2] Cp. W. Kawerau, *Hermann Sudermann*, Magdeburg, 1897.

(1887), was modelled on Maupassant's work, while *Frau Sorge* (1887), one of the most pleasing examples of recent German fiction, is evidently to some extent autobiographical. *Geschwister*, two short stories, appeared in 1888, and in 1889, *Der Katzensteg*, a romance of the Napoleonic invasion of Prussia. Sudermann's most ambitious novel is *Es war* (1894), where, however, the engrossing ethical conflict is marred by a leaning towards sensationalism, both in plot and style.

Die Ehre, 1889.

But it is as a dramatist that Sudermann has had the greatest influence on his contemporaries. His first play, *Die Ehre*, which may be described as a satire on the arbitrary ideas associated with the word "honour," was performed in November, 1889, and inaugurated a new era in the history of the German stage. The interest which *Die Ehre* awakened was due, in the first instance, to its problematic character; it is an effectively constructed drama, in which the ideas of a Berlin factory-owner and his family are contrasted with those of one of his employees; but the real strength of *Die Ehre* is the masterly realism with which the inmates of the "Hinterhaus" are drawn. *Sodoms Ende* (1890), although displaying more careful workmanship than *Die Ehre*, was decadent in subject and style, and hence proved less to the taste of the public.

Heimat, 1893.

In *Heimat* (1893), Sudermann virtually repeated the dramatic motive of *Die Ehre:* in the latter drama, a son returned after long absence to his father's roof, to find that he had outgrown his home; here, it is a daughter. The situations of *Heimat* are more or less sensational in character, but the drama is based on close observation, and the *milieu* in which it plays is excellently depicted. More than any other of this writer's dramas, it illustrates the close affinity between his work and the "bürgerliche Trauerspiel"; *Heimat* stands in the direct line of succession which, beginning with the sentimental pieces of Iffland, culminated in *Maria Magdalene* and *Der Erbförster*. Sudermann's next plays were *Die Schmetterlingsschlacht* (1894) and *Das Glück im Winkel* (1895), of which the latter is, on the whole, the finest work he has yet written. The theatrical elements of *Heimat* are absent; the whole atmosphere is genuinely poetic; while the two leading characters, the East Prussian Junker, Baron von Röcknitz, and Frau Elisabeth

Das Glück im Winkel, 1895.

Wiedemann, are drawn with a power that Sudermann had previously shown only in depicting the lower strata of society. There is more of the subjective charm of *Frau Sorge* in *Das Glück im Winkel* than in any other of his dramatic works.

In 1896, Sudermann collected three one-act pieces under the title *Morituri;* of these, *Teja* is a tragic episode from the Gothic invasion of the Roman Empire, *Fritzchen*, the tragedy of a young officer who falls in a duel, *Das Ewig-Männliche*, a fantastic satire in verse. *Morituri* was succeeded by *Johannes* (1898), an effective drama in prose, on the subject of John the Baptist, which the author provided with an impressive, if wholly modern, psychological background. His next drama, a poetic "Märchen," *Die drei Reiherfedern* (1898), was too deficient in naïveté, both of verse and situation, to assert itself beside other "Märchendramen" of the time; and in his latest works, *Johannisfeuer* (1900) and *Es lebe das Leben* (1902), he has returned to the drama of social life. Although Sudermann's dramatic work is deficient in enduring qualities, he is a writer whose ideas are of very real interest and importance to his contemporaries, and he has the power of putting them in concise and concrete dramatic form, blurred neither by metaphysics nor by romanticism. In a literature such as that of Germany, the faculty of looking at life in a strictly realistic way is valuable, even although it also implies a limitation which makes itself felt whenever Sudermann tries higher flights. Yet even if in his plays of modern life he has only helped to free the German drama from a slavish imitation of the later French playwrights, he has done it a service which cannot be overlooked.

Morituri, 1896.

Johannes, 1898.

The most original dramatist of contemporary German literature is Gerhart Hauptmann,[1] who was born in 1862, at Salzbrunn in Silesia. With that hesitation in deciding upon a career, which seems characteristic of modern writers of genius, Hauptmann began as a student of art in Breslau, then went to the University of Jena to study natural science. After travelling in Spain and Italy, he published an epic, *Promethidenlos* (1885), on the model of *Childe Harold*. Settling in Berlin, Hauptmann came into touch with the group of naturalists to which Holz and Schlaf belonged, and the result was a crude, realistic drama, *Vor Sonnenaufgang* (1889),

G. Hauptmann, born 1862.

Early dramas.

[1] Cp. P. Schlenther, *Gerhart Hauptmann*, Berlin, 1898.

which, a year afterwards, was followed by *Das Friedensfest*. Both of these plays show the influence of Zola and Tolstoi, while *Einsame Menschen*, which appeared in 1891, is written in the manner of Ibsen. It was not, however, until after the production of his fourth work, *Die Weber*,—originally written in dialect as *De Waber* (1892)—that Hauptmann began to be generally known. The subject of *Die Weber* is the rising of the Silesian weavers in 1844; but there is little or no plot in the drama. It is the dramatisation of an event which involves, without distinction of persons, a whole class of society; the misery before which that class succumbs, takes, as has well been said, the place of hero, and *Die Weber* is thus, in a sense undreamt-of by earlier dramatists, a "Volks-drama." This was the first of Hauptmann's plays to reveal his remarkable talent for dramatic writing: not only did he succeed in awakening interest for the unpleasant *milieu* of the drama, but he gave each of the many figures a definite and clear-cut personality, and that solely by legitimate dramatic means. *College Crampton*, a study of an artist fallen on evil days, which also appeared in 1892, did not aim so high as *Die Weber*, but was even more effective on the stage.

Die Weber, 1892.

In 1893, Hauptmann wrote a work of a very different kind from anything he had hitherto attempted: *Hanneles Himmelfahrt* is a strange play in which naturalism and Romantic poetry appear side by side. Hannele Mattern, the child of a drunken mason, has tried to drown herself; she is dragged out of the water and brought to the almshouse, where her feverish visions are represented to the spectator. The figures and stories of the child's imagination—all that she has been taught of death, of heaven and angels—take visible form and become associated in her mind with her actual life and surroundings; her teacher appears, for instance, as Christ, and raises her to life, just as if she had been Jairus's daughter. Finally, the dream vanishes; the crude reality of the almshouse returns; the child is dead. In this attempt to portray the dreams of a dying child of the people, Hauptmann has perhaps unduly accentuated the Romantic side of the picture; the contrast between Hannele's dreams and the unmitigated squalor of her surroundings jars upon the spectators by its strong contrast. But the play at least proved

Hanneles Himmelfahrt, 1893.

that its author was too independent a dramatist to allow himself to be hemmed in by a narrow theory of realism.

Der Biberpelz (1893), "eine Diebskomödie," is a slighter play, and wholly realistic in style. The characters are clear cut and drawn with the same genial humour that distinguished *College Crampton*. *Florian Geyer* (1895), Hauptmann's next tragedy, is an effort to break down the prejudice which hinders a modern writer from handling historical themes. *Florian Geyer* is a historical drama in so far as it deals with the Peasants' War in the stormy times of Götz von Berlichingen; but Hauptmann's art and method remain the same as in *Die Weber*—in its *technique*, in fact, *Florian Geyer* is only *Die Weber* repeated on a grander scale. Moreover, the subject, as Hauptmann wished to treat it, was too unwieldy, the personages were too numerous, and where clear outlines and bold strokes were required, his minute workmanship was naturally ineffectual.

Florian Geyer, 1895.

With the exception of *Die Ehre*, *Die versunkene Glocke* (1897) has been the most popular drama of the present period. Still another side of its author's talent is revealed in this "Märchendrama"; poetry, imagination, and fairy-lore take the place of the sordid realities of his early plays. A bellfounder has made a church-bell, which he regards as his best achievement, but, as it is being borne to the church, the waggon is overturned by a "Waldschrat" or faun, the bell sinks into a lake, and Heinrich the bellfounder almost loses his life. He falls under the spell of an elf, Rautendelein, who tempts him away from wife and home. High up in the mountains, free from earthly cares and lowly aspirations, he lives for his work alone, until the tones of the sunken bell rise from the lake and drag him down to earth again. The symbolism and allegory of the poem are not difficult to understand; it is the tragedy of the artist's life in a new form. When more closely examined, however, *Die versunkene Glocke* has many realistic features: the human personages are, it is true, indefinite and shadowy types compared with Hauptmann's earlier characters, but the supernatural figures, the Waldschrat, the Nickelmann, and even Rautendelein are thoroughly realistic and bear witness to the literary influence of Germany's greatest modern artist, Arnold Böcklin (1827-1901). Thus when, in his next work, Haupt-

Die versunkene Glocke, 1897.

mann returned to the *milieu* of his first dramas, the step was not so great as at first appeared. *Fuhrmann Henschel* (1898) is a tragedy of village life. The carrier of a Silesian "Badeort," whose wife dies at the beginning of the play, marries Hanna Schäl, his servant, who has made herself indispensable in his household; but the words with which his dying wife has warned him against Hanna haunt him like the Furies of the ancient drama; his second marriage brings nothing but misery upon him, and ultimately, in despair, he hangs himself. While *Fuhrmann Henschel* thus conformed to the traditional methods of tragedy, *Schluck und Jau* (1900) was a fantastic comedy on original lines, the subject having been suggested by the prologue to *The Taming of the Shrew;* the hero of the piece is a vagabond who is made to believe that he is a prince. In 1900, Hauptmann also wrote *Michael Kramer*, a drama of artist-life, in which the interesting characters hardly compensated for the want of dramatic action, and in 1901, *Der rote Hahn*, a sequel to *Der Biberpelz.*

Fuhrmann Henschel, 1898.

Minor dramatists.

Beside Sudermann and Hauptmann, a number of minor writers have helped to give the German stage that prominence as a literary institution, for which it was admirably fitted by its technical and artistic organisation. With plays like *Alexandra* (1888) and *Eva* (1889), Richard Voss (born 1851) was, to some extent, a forerunner of the new school of dramatists. Max Halbe (born 1865) is the author of one or two skilful dramas, such as *Jugend* (1893) and *Mutter Erde* (1898); and interesting plays have also been written by W. Kirchbach (born 1857), O. E. Hartleben (born 1864), and Ernst Rosmer (pseudonym for Elsa Bernstein, born 1866). Comedy is still what it has always been, the weak side of the German drama; mention has, however, to be made of the work of Max Dreyer (born 1862), while Ludwig Fulda (born 1862) has employed to good advantage his talent for writing graceful verse by translating Molière's masterpieces (1892). Fulda's original plays, the most successful of which was *Der Talisman* (1893), are built upon conventional motives and deficient in seriousness of aim. In Austria, the most gifted of the younger dramatists is Arthur Schnitzler (born 1862), whose finely pointed dialogues (*Anatol*, 1893) reveal a talent that is more French than German; his plays (*Liebelei*, 1895; *Das Vermächtnis*, 1898; *Der grüne Kakadu*, 1899;

Austrian writers.

Der Schleier der Beatrice, 1900) are, despite a fondness for morbid problems and motives, characteristically Austrian in tone and style. Hermann Bahr (born 1863), who is, at the same time, the leading Austrian critic of the new school, has also written dramas (*Das Tschaperl*, 1898; *Der Apostel*, 1901) which have been popular in Vienna. Most promising of all the younger Austrians is Hugo von Hofmannsthal (born 1874), who has learnt much from the Italian writer, D'Annunzio. None of the lyric poets of the time has written verses so full of music and subtle imagery as are to be found in Hofmannsthal's poetic plays, *Der Thor und der Tod* (1894), *Die Hochzeit der Sobeide* and *Der Abenteurer und die Sängerin* (1899).

The realistic novel.

Almost contemporaneous with the dramatic revival, the novel, under the influence of French and Russian models, entered upon a new stage of its development. We have already traced the inroads of modern realism in the work of Fontane, and have seen how Sudermann's novels benefited by the stimulus of foreign writers. Realistic novels, in the restricted sense of that word, have been written by H. Conradi (1862-90), M. Kretzer (born 1854), M. G. Conrad (born 1846), Karl Bleibtreu (born 1859), and K. Alberti (born 1862). In spite, however, of the enthusiasm with which French naturalism was greeted in Germany about 1880, neither novel nor drama long remained faithful to the principles of the movement. Just as Hauptmann turned from *Die Weber* to *Hanneles Himmelfahrt*, a writer like Kretzer followed up the undiluted naturalism of *Meister Timpe* (1888) with the supernaturalism and naturalism of *Das Gesicht Christi* (1897). Characteristic of the latest development of German fiction is the large number of good novels written by women. Besides fine poetic talents like Ricarda Huch (born 1864) and Isolde Kurz (born 1863), who have published mainly short stories and verse, Helene Böhlau (born 1859), Gabriele Reuter (born 1859), and Clara Viebig (born 1860) may also be mentioned as representative novelists.

The criterion of an outstanding epoch in literature has always been not so much great poetry as great personalities, and, with the exception of Richard Wagner, whose work only partly belongs to literature, all Germany's prominent literary personalities—Lessing and Herder, Schiller and Goethe—were men of the eighteenth, not the nineteenth century. Thus although

the latter century, by virtue of the extraordinary richness and variety of its literature, occupies a larger space in a history of German letters than any preceding period of the same duration, it has not been as decisive an epoch for the national life as that which culminated with the year 1800. The general movement of the nineteenth century has been a gradual descent from the "Blütezeit" with which the century opened, but a descent full of interesting episodes and pauses, as well as occasional recoveries of lost ground. At the beginning of the period, Germany was, as we have seen, at the zenith of her literary greatness; Schiller was writing his chief dramas, Goethe completing *Faust;* the Romantic Movement was rapidly extending its influence over every literature in Europe; under the stimulus of Romanticism, Kleist and Grillparzer were fitting themselves to be Schiller's successors, while lyric poetry flowed more freely and abundantly than at any time since the heyday of the Minnesang. With Goethe's death and the July Revolution came a pause; the political era in German literature set in; French influence asserted itself as it had not done since the middle of the eighteenth century. After the Revolution of 1848, which extinguished the political hopes of a whole generation, pessimism settled down over German literature, and national writers, like Hebbel and Keller, were little heeded until their day was over, or nearly over. Then came the war with France, and the German national spirit awakened anew. Wagner's dramatic work roused the German theatre from its lethargy and indifferentism, and the novel and the lyric shook themselves free from the burdens of mid-century tradition. In how far this revived activity of the close of the nineteenth century will leave a permanent mark upon the development of German literature, it is for the future to decide.

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